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A

TREATISE

CONCERNING

RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I. Concerning the Nature of the AFFECTIONS, and their Importance in RELIGION.

PART II. Shewing what are NO CERTAIN SIGNS that RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS are GRACIOUS, or that they are NOT.

PART III. Shewing what ARE DISTINGUISHING SIGNS of truly gracious and HOLY AFFECTIONS.

By JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.
And Paſtor of the firſt Church at Northampton.

Lev. ix. ult. and x. 1, 2. *And there came a fire out from before the Lord,—upon the altar;—which when all the people ſaw, they ſhouted, and fell on their faces. And Nadab and Abihu—offered ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not: and there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.*

Cant. ii. 12, 13. *The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the ſinging of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good ſmell.* Verſ. 15. *Take us the foxes, the little foxes which ſpoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.*

ELIZABETH-TOWN:

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M,DCC,LXXXVII.

THE

PREFACE.

THERE is no queſtion whatſoever, that is of greater importance to mankind, and that it more concerns every individual perſon to be well reſolved in, than this, *What are the diſtinguiſhing qualifications of thoſe that are in favour with God, and intitled to his eternal rewards?* Or, which comes to the ſame thing, *What is the nature of true religion? and wherein do lie the diſtinguiſhing notes of that virtue and holineſs, that is acceptable in the ſight of God?* But though it be of ſuch importance, and though we have clear and abundant light in the word of God to direct us in this matter, yet there is no one point, wherein profeſſing Chriſtians do more differ one from another. It would be endleſs to reckon up the variety of opinions in this point, that divide the Chriſtian world; making manifeſt the truth of that of our Saviour, *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leads to life, and few there be that find it.*

The conſideration of theſe things has long engaged me to attend to this matter, with the utmoſt diligence and care, and exactneſs of ſearch and inquiry, that I have been capable of: it is a ſubject on which my mind has been peculiarly intent, ever ſince I firſt entered on the ſtudy of divinity.—But as to the ſucceſs of my inquiries, it muſt be left to the judgment of the reader of the following treatiſe.

I am ſenſible it is much more difficult to judge impartially of that which is the ſubject of this diſcourſe, in the midſt of the duſt and ſmoke of ſuch a ſtate of controverſy, as this land is now in, about things of this nature: as it is more difficult to write impartially, ſo it is more difficult to read impartially.—Many will probably be hurt in their ſpirits, to find ſo much that appertains to religious affection, here condemned: and perhaps indignation and contempt will be excited in others, by finding ſo much here juſtified and approved. And it may be, ſome will be ready to charge me with inconſiſtence with myſelf, in ſo much approving ſome things, and ſo much condemning others; as I have found, this has always been objected to me by ſome, ever ſince the beginning of our late controverſies about religion. It is a hard thing to be a hearty zealous friend of what has been *good* and glorious, in the late extraordinary

appearances,

appearances, and to rejoice much in it; and at the ſame time, to ſee the evil and pernicious tendency of what has been *bad*, and earneſtly to oppoſe that. But yet, I am *humbly*, but *fully* perſuaded, we ſhall never be in the way of truth, nor go on in a way acceptable to God, and tending to the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, till we do ſo. There is indeed ſomething very myſterious in it, that ſo much good, and ſo much bad, ſhould be mixed together in the *church of God*: as it is a myſterious thing, and what has puzzled and amazed many a good Chriſtian, that there ſhould be that which is ſo divine and precious, as the ſaving grace of God, and the new and divine nature, dwelling in the ſame heart, with ſo much corruption, hypocriſy, and iniquity, in *a particular ſaint*. Yet neither of theſe, is more myſterious than real. And neither of them is a new or rare thing. It is no new thing, that much falſe religion ſhould prevail, at a time of great reviving of true religion; and that at ſuch a time, multitudes of hypocrites ſhould ſpring up among true ſaints. It was ſo in that great reformation, and revival of religion, that was in Joſiah's time; as appears by Jer. iii. 10. and iv. 3, 4. and alſo by the great apoſtaſy that there was in the land, ſo ſoon after his reign. So it was in that great out-pouring of the Spirit upon the Jews, that was in the days of *John the Baptiſt*; as appears by the great apoſtaſy of that people, ſo ſoon after ſo general an awakening, and the temporary religious comforts and joys of many; John v. 35. "Ye were "willing for a ſeaſon to rejoice in his light." So it was in thoſe great commotions that were among the multitude, occaſioned by the preaching of Jeſus Chriſt: *Of the many that were then called, but few were choſen*; of the multitude that were rouſed and affected by his preaching, and at one time or other appeared mightily engaged, full of admiration of Chriſt, and elevated with joy, but few were true diſciples, that ſtood the ſhock of the great trials that came afterwards, and endured to the end: many were like the ſtony ground, or thorny ground; and but few, comparatively, like the good ground. Of the whole heap that was gathered, great part was chaff, that the wind afterwards drove away; and the heap of wheat that was left, was comparatively ſmall; as appears abundantly, by the hiſtory of the New Teſtament. So it was in that great out-pouring of the Spirit that was in the apoſtles days; as appears by Matth. xxiv. 10—13. Gal. iii. 1. and iv. 11, 15. Phil. ii. 21. and iii. 18, 19. and the two epiſtles to the Corinthians, and many

other

other parts of the New Teſtament. And ſo it was in the great *reformation* from Popery.—It appears plainly to have been in the viſible church of God, in times of great reviving of religion, from time to time, as it is with the fruit-trees in the ſpring; there are a multitude of bloſſoms; all which appear fair and beautiful, and there is a promiſing appearance of young fruits: but many of them are but of ſhort continuance, they ſoon fall off, and never come to maturity.

Not that it is to be ſuppoſed that it will always be ſo: for though there never will, in this world, be an entire purity; either in particular ſaints, in a perfect freedom from mixtures of corruption; or in the church of God, without any mixture of hypocrites with ſaints, and counterfeit religion, and falſe appearances of grace, with true religion and real holineſs: yet, it is evident, that there will come a time of much greater purity in the church of God, than has been in ages paſt; it is plain by theſe texts of ſcripture, If. lii. 1. Ezek. xliv. 6, 7, 9. Joel iii. 17. Zech. xiv. 21. Pſal. lxix. 32, 35, 36. If. xxxv. 8, 10. chap. iv. 3, 4. Ezek. xx. 38. Pſal. xxxvii. 9, 10, 11, 29. And one great reaſon of it will be, that at that time, God will give much greater light to his people, to diſtinguiſh between true religion and its counterfeits, Mal. iii. 3. "And he ſhall ſit as a refiner "and purifier of ſilver: and he ſhall purify the ſons of Levi, "and purge them as gold and ſilver, that they may offer to the "Lord an offering in righteouſneſs." With verſ. 18. which is a continuation of the prophecy of the ſame happy times, "Then ſhall ye return, and diſcern between the righteous and "the wicked; between him that ſerveth God, and him that "ſerveth him not."

It is by the mixture of counterfeit religion with true, not diſcerned and diſtinguiſhed, that the devil has had his greateſt advantage againſt the cauſe and kingdom of Chriſt, all along, hitherto. It is plainly by this means, principally, that he has prevailed againſt all revivings of religion, that ever have been, ſince the firſt founding of the Chriſtian church. By this, he hurt the cauſe of Chriſtianity, in, and after the apoſtolic age, much more than by all the perſecutions of both Jews and Heathens: the apoſtles, in all their epiſtles, ſhew themſelves much more concerned at the former miſchief, than the latter. By this, Satan prevailed againſt the reformation, begun by Luther, Zuinglius, *&c.* to put a ſtop to its progreſs, and bring it into diſgrace; ten times more, than by all thoſe bloody, cruel, and

before

before unheard-of perfecutions of the church of Rome. By this principally, has he prevailed againſt revivals of religion, that have been in our nation ſince the reformation. By this he prevailed againſt New-England, to quench the love, and ſpoil the joy of her eſpouſals, about an hundred years ago. And I think, I have had opportunity enough to ſee plainly, that by this, the devil has prevailed againſt the late, great revival of religion in New-England, ſo happy and promiſing in its beginning: here moſt evidently has been the main advantage Satan has had againſt us; by this he has foiled us; it is by this means that the daughter of Zion in this land, now lies on the ground, in ſuch piteous circumſtances, as we now behold her; with her garments rent, her face disfigured, her nakedneſs expoſed, her limbs broken, and weltering in the blood of her own wounds, and in no wiſe able to ariſe; and this, ſo quickly after her late great joys and hopes: Lam. i. 17. "Zion ſpreadeth forth her "hands, and there is none to comfort her: the Lord hath "commanded concerning Jacob, that his adverſaries ſhall be "round about him: Jeruſalem is as a menſtruous woman "among them." I have ſeen the devil prevail the ſame way, againſt two great revivings of religion in this country.—Satan goes on with mankind, as he began with them. He prevailed againſt our firſt parents, and caſt them out of paradiſe, and ſuddenly brought all their happineſs and glory to an end, by appearing to be a friend to their happy paradiſaic ſtate, and pretending to advance it to higher degrees. So the ſame cunning ſerpent, that beguiled Eve through his ſubtilty, by perverting us from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt, hath ſuddenly prevailed to deprive us of that fair proſpect, we had a little while ago, of a kind of paradiſaic ſtate of the church of God in New-England.

After religion has revived in the church of God, and enemies appear, people that are engaged to defend its cauſe, are commonly moſt expoſed, where they are leaſt ſenſible of danger. While they are wholly intent upon the oppoſition that appears openly before them, to make head againſt that, and do neglect carefully to look all round them, the devil comes behind them, and gives a fatal ſtab unſeen; and has opportunity to give a more home ſtroke, and wound the deeper, becauſe he ſtrikes at his leiſure, and according to his pleaſure, being obſtructed by no guard or reſiſtance.

And ſo it is likely ever to be in the church, whenever religion

gion revives remarkably, till we have learned well to diſtinguiſh between true and falſe religion, between ſaving affections and experiences, and thoſe manifold fair ſhews, and gliſtering appearances, by which they are counterfeited; the conſequences of which, when they are not diſtinguiſhed, are often inexpreſſibly dreadful. *By this means*, the devil gratifies himſelf, by bringing it to paſs, that that ſhould be offered to God, by multitudes, under a notion of a pleaſing acceptable ſervice to him that is indeed above all things abominable to him. *By this means*, he deceives great multitudes about the ſtate of their ſouls; making them think they are ſomething, when they are nothing; and ſo eternally undoes them: and not only ſo, but eſtabliſhes many in a ſtrong confidence of their eminent holineſs, who are in God's ſight, ſome of the vileſt of hypocrites. *By this means*, he many ways damps and wounds religion in the hearts of the ſaints, obſcures and deforms it by corrupt mixtures, cauſes their religious affections wofully to degenerate, and ſometimes for a conſiderable time, to be like the *manna*, that bred worms and ſtank; and dreadfully enſnares and confounds the minds of others of the ſaints, and brings them into great difficulties and temptation, and entangles them in a wilderneſs, out of which they can by no means extricate themſelves. *By this means*, Satan mightily encourages the hearts of open enemies of religion, and ſtrengthens their hands, and fills them with weapons, and makes ſtrong their fortreſſes; when at the ſame time, religion and the church of God lie expoſed to them, as a city without walls. *By this means*, he brings it to paſs, that men work wickedneſs under a notion of doing God ſervice, and to ſin without reſtraint, yea with earneſt forwardneſs and zeal, and with all their might. *By this means*, he brings in even the friends of religion, inſenſibly to themſelves, to do the work of enemies, by deſtroying religion in a far more effectual manner than open enemies can do, under a notion of advancing it. *By this means*, the devil ſcatters the flock of Chriſt, and ſets them one againſt another, and that with great heat of ſpirit, under a notion of zeal for God; and religion by degrees, degenerates into vain jangling; and during the ſtrife, Satan leads both parties far out of the right way, driving each to great extremes, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, according as he finds they are moſt inclined, or moſt eaſily moved and ſwayed, till the right path in the middle is almoſt wholly neglected. And in the midſt of this

confuſion,

confuſion, the devil has great opportunity to advance his own intereſt, and make it ſtrong in ways innumerable, and get the government of all into his own hands, and work his own will. And by what is ſeen of the terrible conſequences of this counterfeit religion, when not diſtinguiſhed from true religion, God's people in general have their minds unhinged and unſettled, in things of religion, and know not where to ſet their foot, or what to think or do; and many are brought into doubts, whether there be any thing at all in religion; and hereſy, and infidelity, and atheiſm greatly prevail.

Therefore, it greatly concerns us to uſe our utmoſt endeavours, clearly to diſcern, and have it well ſettled and eſtabliſhed, wherein true religion does conſiſt. Till this be done, it may be expected that great revivings of religion will be but of ſhort continuance: till this be done, there is but little good to be expected of all our warm debates, in converſation and from the preſs, not knowing clearly and diſtinctly what we ought to contend for.

My deſign is to contribute my mite, and uſe my beſt (however feeble) endeavours to this end, in the enſuing Treatiſe: wherein it muſt be noted, that my deſign is ſomewhat diverſe from the deſign of what I have formerly publiſhed, which was to ſhew *the diſtinguiſhing marks of a work of the Spirit of God*, including both his common and ſaving operations; but what I aim at now, is to ſhew the nature and ſigns of the *gracious operations* of God's Spirit, by which they are to be diſtinguiſhed from all things whatſoever that the minds of men are the ſubjects of, which are not of a ſaving nature. If I have ſucceeded in this my aim, in any tolerable meaſure, I hope it will tend to promote the intereſt of religion. And whether I have ſucceeded to bring any light to this ſubject, or no, and however my attempt may be reproached, in theſe captious, cenſorious times, I hope in the mercy of a gracious and righteous God, for the acceptance of the ſincerity of my endeavours; and hope alſo for the candour and prayers of the true followers of the meek and charitable Lamb of God.

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Mr. Henry Rome, merchant, New-York.
John Roſſell, Orange county,
Peter Read, do.
Richard Robertſon, tanner, New-York,

SUBSCRIBERS NAMES.

Mr. Abraham Raymond, Columbia county,
Gamaliel Ripley.

S.

Rev. John Shepard, Eſſex county, New-Jerſey,
Rev. John Stevens, Columbia county,
Dr. Iſaac Sherwood, Orange county,
Iſaac Snowden, Eſq. Philadelphia,
William Smith, Eſq. St. George's Manor, Suffolk county,
Meſſrs. Smith and Phelps, bookſellers, in Hartford, 12 books,
Mr. Peter Studdiford, ſtudent in divinity, New-York,
James Saur, Orange county,
John Saur, jun. do.
Benjamin Saur, do.
Iſaac Serjeant, Wardſeſſon, 12 books,
Richard Sill, A. M. Albany,
John Sawyer, A. B. Orford, New-Hampſhire,
Nathan Sheppard, Cumberland county, New-Jerſey,
George Shaw, cabinet-maker, Philadelphia,
Archibald Stewart, Suſſex county, 2 books,
Edward Savage Salem, Waſhington county,
James Seely, Poundridge,
Edward Scofield, Stanford,
Auſten Smith, jun. do.
Peter Smith, Concord, Suſſex county, New-Jerſey,
Henry Squier, Eſſex county,
Edward Sherman, Columbia county,
Daniel Smith, do.
Ephraim Smith, do.
John Skinner, do.
Jonas Safford, Poultney.

T.

Henry Townſend, Eſq. iron maſter, Orange county,
Mr. John Tobias, merchant, Albany county,
William Thompſon, Eſq. attorney at law, Orange county,
Lathrop Thomſon, A. B. Windſor, Vermont,
Deacon Hezekiah Thomſon, do. do.
Mr. Benjamin Thaw, Philadelphia,
Joſeph Tatem, do.
Rulif Traphagen, Elizabeth-Town,
Nehemiah Teunis, do.
Aaron Thompſon, ſchoolmaſter, Eſſex county,
Philip Temple, Columbia county,
Malachi Thomas, do.

Mr. Jacob Tallman, Clark's-Town,
Thomas Talmage, New-Brunſwick.
Zeb. Tracy.

U. & V.

Rev. Thomas Uſtick, A. M. Philadelphia,
Rev. William Van Horne, A. M. Scotch-Plains
Lucas Van Beverhoudt, Eſq. Morris county,
Mr. Peter Vandervoort, jun.
Beekman Van Beuren, merchant, New-York,
Samuel Van Steinberg, do.
Samuel Vail, Somerſet county.

W.

Rev. E. Weſterlow, V. D. M. Albany,
Rev. Moſes C. Welch,
Mr. Alexander Phœnix Waldron, New-York,
John D. Witt, jun. Dutches county,
Benjamin Wallace, of the city of Albany, merchant,
J. W. Wilkin, A. B. Goſhen,
Major Jacob Wright, do.
Iſaac Wheaton, Eſq. Cumberland county, New-Jerſey,
Mr. Elbert Willet, Albany,
William Watts, Bucks county, Pennſylvania,
Thomas Woodruff, 3d.
Stephen Wheeler, Elizabeth-Town,
Jeſſe Woodruff, do.
Seth Woodruff, do.
John Wright, Mendham, Morris-county,
Joſiah Warner, Columbia-county,
Luther Waſhburn, do.
Stephen Webb,
Maurice Wurts, Hunterdon county.
John Wurts, Flanders, Morris county.

Y.

Mr. William Young, bookſeller, Philadelphia,
James Yorke.

Z.

Mr. Chriſtian Zabriſkie, Bergen county.

THE

THE

LIFE

Of the Reverend

MR. JONATHAN EDWARDS.

PART I.

Containing the Hiſtory of his Life, from his BIRTH *to his* SETTLEMENT *in the work of the* MINISTRY.

MR. JONATHAN EDWARDS was born October 5, 1703, at Windſor, a town in Connecticut. His father was the Rev. Mr. Timothy Edwards, miniſter of the goſpel on the eaſt ſide of Connecticut river in Windſor. He began to reſide and preach at Windſor in November 1694, but was not ordained until July, 1698. He died January 27, 1758, in the 89th year of his age, not two months before this his ſon. He was in the work of the miniſtry above fifty-nine years: And from his firſt beginning to reſide and preach there, to his death, are above ſixty-three years; and was able to attend on the work of the miniſtry and preach conſtantly until within a few years before his death. He was very univerſally eſteemed and beloved as an upright, pious, exemplary man, and faithful miniſter of the goſpel; and was greatly uſeful. He was born at Hartford in Connecticut, May 14, 1669, received the honours of the college at Cambridge in New-England, by having the degrees of Batchelor and Maſter of Arts given him the ſame day, July 4, 1694, one in the forenoon, and the other in the afternoon.

On the 6th day of November 1694, he was married to Mrs. Eſther Stoddard, in the 23d year of her age, the daughter of the late famous Mr. Solomon Stoddard of Northampton; whoſe great parts and zeal for experimental religion are well known in all the churches in America; and will probably be tranſmitted to poſterity yet unborn, by his valuable writings. They

lived together in the married ſtate above ſixty-three years. Mrs. Edwards was born June 2, 1672.

They had eleven Children: All which lived to adult years, viz. ten daughters, and this their only ſon and fifth child.*

Mr.

* As the following more large and particular account, of Mr. Edwards's anceſtors may gratify ſome readers, it is inſerted here in the Margin.

Mr. Edwards's grandfather was Mr. Richard Edwards. His firſt wife was Mrs. Elizabeth Tuttle, daughter of Mr. William Tuttle of New-Haven in Connecticut, and Mrs. Elis Tuttle his wife, who came out of Northamtonſhire in England. His ſecond wife was Mrs. Talcot, ſiſter to governor Talcot: By his firſt wife he had ſeven children, the oldeſt of which was the Rev. Mr. Timothy Edwards of Windſor, his father, before mentioned. By his ſecond wife Mrs. Talcot, he had ſix children.

The father of Mr. Richard Edwards was Mr. William Edwards, who came from England young and unmarried. His wife, Mrs. Agnes Edwards, who alſo came out of England, had two brothers in England, one of them Mayor of Exeter, and the other of Barnſtable. Mr. William Edwards's father was the Rev. Mr. Rich. Edwards, miniſter of the goſpel in London. He lived in Queen Eliſabeth's day, and his wife Mrs. Anne Edwards aſſiſted in making a ruff for the queen. After the death of Mr. Edwards ſhe married to one Mr. James Cole. She with her ſecond huſband, and her ſon William Edwards came into America, and all died at Hartford in Connecticut.

Mr. Edwards's grandfather, (Mr. Solomon Stoddard, and his predeceſſor at Northampton) married Mrs. Mather, the relict of the Rev. Mr. Mather his predeceſſor, and the firſt miniſter at Northampton. Her maiden name was Eſther Warham, daughter and youngeſt child of the Rev. Mr. John Warham, miniſter at Windſor in Connecticut, who came out of England, before which he was miniſter in Exeter in England: He had four children, all daughters; and Mrs. Warham ſurvived him, and had two daughters by Mr. Newbury, her ſecond huſband.

Mrs. Eſther Warham had three children by Mr. Mather, viz. Eunice, Warham and Eliakim. And ſhe had twelve children by Mr. Stoddard, ſix ſons and ſix daughters: Three of the ſons died in infancy. The three that lived to adult years were Anthony, John and Iſrael. Iſrael died in priſon in France. Anthony was the Rev. Mr. Anthony Stoddard, late miniſter of the Goſpel at Woodbury

Mr. Edwards entered Yale College in the year 1716, and received the degree of Batchelor of Arts in September, 1720, a little before he was ſeventeen years old. He had the character of a ſober youth, and a good ſcholar while he was a member of the college. In his ſecond year at college, and thirteenth of his age, he read Locke on the human underſtanding, with great delight and profit. His uncommon genius, by which he was, as it were by nature, formed for cloſeneſs of thought and deep penetration, now began to exerciſe and diſcover itſelf. Taking that book into his hand, upon ſome occaſion, not long before his death, he ſaid to ſome of his ſelect friends, who were then with him, That he was beyond expreſſion entertained and pleaſed with it, when he read it in his youth at college; that he was as much engaged, and had more ſatisfaction and pleaſure in ſtudying it, than the moſt greedy miſer in gathering up handfuls of ſilver and gold from ſome new diſcovered treaſure.

Though he made good proficiency in all the arts and ſciences, and had an uncommon taſte for natural philoſophy, which he cultivated to the end of his life, with that juſtneſs and accuracy of thought which was almoſt peculiar to him; yet moral philoſophy or divinity was his favorite ſtudy. In this he early made great progreſs. He

bury in Connecticut, who lived to a great age, and was in the work of the miniſtry ſixty years: He died September 6, 1760, in the eighty-ſecond year of his age. John was the honourable John Stoddard, Eſq. who lived at Northampton, and who often, eſpecially in his younger years, ſerved the town as their repreſentative at the great and general court in Boſton; and was long head of the county of Hampſhire as their chief Colonel, and chief Judge of the court of common pleas: And he long ſerved his majeſty, and the province of the Maſſachuſetts-Bay, as one of his Majeſty's council. He was remarkable as a politician, and for his ſpirit of government; a wiſe counſellor, an upright and ſkilful judge, a ſteady and great friend to the intereſt of religion. He was a great friend and admirer of Mr. Edwards, and greatly ſtrengthened his hands in the work of the miniſtry while he lived. A more particular account of the life and character of this truly great man may be ſeen in the ſermon which Mr. Edwards preached and publiſhed on the occaſion of his death.

Mr. Stoddard's father was Anthony Stoddard, Eſq. of Boſton, a zealous congregational man. He had five wives, the firſt of which, Mr. Stoddard's mother, was Mrs. Mary Downing, ſiſter to Sir George Downing, whoſe other ſiſter married Governor Bradſtreet. Mr. Solomon Stoddard was their oldeſt child.

He lived at college near two years after he took his firſt degree, deſigning and preparing for the work of the miniſtry. After which, having paſſed the pre-requiſite trials, he was licenced to preach the goſpel as a candidate. And being pitched upon, and applied to by a number of miniſters in New-England, who were intruſted to act in behalf of the Engliſh preſbyterians at New-York, as a perſon to be ſent to them, he complied with their requeſt, and went to New-York the beginning of Auguſt, 1722; and preached there to very good acceptance about eight months. But by reaſon of the ſmallneſs of that ſociety, and ſome ſpecial difficulties that attended it, he did not think they were in a capacity to ſettle a miniſter, with a rational proſpect of anſwering the good ends propoſed. He therefore left them, the next ſpring, and retired to his father's houſe; where he ſpent the ſummer in cloſe ſtudy. He was indeed earneſtly ſolicited by the people he had been among at New-York to return to them again; but for the reaſon juſt mentioned, he could not think himſelf in the way of his duty to gratify them.

In September, 1723, he received his degree of Maſter of Arts; about which time he had invitations from ſeveral congregations to come among them in order to his ſettlement in the work of the miniſtry; but being choſen tutor of Yale-College the next ſpring in the year 1724, being in the twenty firſt year of his age, he retired to the college, and attended the buſineſs of tutor there above two years.

While he was in this place, he was applied to by the people at Northampton, with an invitation to come and ſettle in the work of the miniſtry there, with his grandfather Stoddard, who by reaſon of his great age, ſtood in need of aſſiſtance. He therefore reſigned his tutorſhip, in September, 1726, and accepted of their invitation; and was ordained in the work of the miniſtry at Northampton, colleague with his grandfather Stoddard, February 15, 1727, in the twenty fourth year of his age, where he continued in the work of the miniſtry until June 22, 1750, twenty three years and four months.

Between the time of his going to New-York and his ſettlement at Northampton, he formed a number of reſolutions, and committed them to writing: the particular time, and ſpecial occaſion of his making many of them, he has noted in his diary which he then kept; as well as many other obſervations and rules, which related to his own exerciſes and conduct.

duct. And as these resolutions, together with the things noted in his diary, may justly be considered, as the foundation and plan of his whole life, it may be proper here to give the reader a taste and idea of them: Which will therefore be done in the following extracts.

PART II.

Containing EXTRACTS *from his* PRIVATE WRITINGS, *&c.*

SECTION I.

His RESOLUTIONS.

BEING sensible that I am unable to do any thing without God's help, I do humbly intreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake.

Remember to read over these RESOLUTIONS *once a Week.*

1. Resolved, That I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God's glory, and my own good, profit and pleasure, in the whole of my duration, without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence. Resolved to do whatever I think to be my duty, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general. Resolved to do this, whatever difficulties I meet with, how many and how great soever.

2. Resolved, to be continually endeavouring to find out some new invention and contrivance to promote the fore-mentioned things.

4. Resolved, never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God; nor be, nor suffer it, if I can avoid it.

5. Resolved, never to loose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can.

6. Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.

7. Resolved, never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last hour of my life.

9. Resolved, to think much on all occasions of my own dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.

11. Re-

11. Reſolved, when I think of any theorem in divinity to be ſolved, immediately to do what I can towards ſolving it, if circumſtances do not hinder.

13. Reſolved, to be endeavouring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.

14. Reſolved, never to do any thing out of revenge.

15. Reſolved, never to ſuffer the leaſt motions of anger to irrational beings.

17. Reſolved, that I will live ſo as I ſhall wiſh I had done when I come to die.

18. Reſolved, to live ſo at all times, as I think is beſt in my devout frames, and when I have cleareſt notions of things of the goſpel, and another world.

20. Reſolved, to maintain the ſtricteſt temperance in eating and drinking.

21. Reſolved, never to do any thing, which if I ſhould ſee in another, I ſhould count a juſt occaſion to deſpiſe him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.

24. Reſolved, whenever I do any conſpicuouſly evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cauſe; and then both carefully endeavour to do ſo no more, and to fight and pray with all my might againſt the original of it.

28. Reſolved, to ſtudy the ſcriptures ſo ſteadily, conſtantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myſelf to grow in the knowlege of the ſame.

30. Reſolved, to ſtrive to my utmoſt every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exerciſe of grace, than I was the week before.

32. Reſolved, to be ſtrictly and firmly faithful to my truſt, that that in Prov. xx. 6. "A faithful man who can find?" may not be partly fulfilled in me.

33. Reſolved, always to do what I can towards making, maintaining and eſtabliſhing peace, when it can be without over-balancing detriment in other reſpects.

34. Reſolved, in narrations never to ſpeak any thing but the pure and ſimple verity.

36. Reſolved, never to ſpeak evil of any, except I have ſome particular good call for it.

37. Reſolved, to enquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what ſin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myſelf: Alſo, at the end of every week, month and year.

38. Re-

38. Reſolved, never to ſpeak any thing that is ridiculous, or matter of laughter on the Lord's Day.

39. Reſolved, never to do any thing that I ſo much queſtion the lawfulneſs of, as that I intend, at the ſame time, to conſider and examine afterwards whether it be lawful or no: except I as much queſtion the lawfulneſs of the omiſſion.

41. Reſolved, to aſk myſelf at the end of every day, week, month and year, wherein I could poſſibly in any reſpect have done better.

42. Reſolved frequently to renew the dedication of myſelf to God, which was made at my baptiſm; which I ſolemnly renewed, when I was received into the communion of the church; and which I have ſolemnly re-made this twelfth day of January, 1722—3.

43. Reſolved, never henceforward, till I die, to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's, agreeable to what is to be found in Saturday, January 12.

46. Reſolved, never to allow the leaſt meaſure of any fretting uneaſineſs at my father or mother. Reſolved to ſuffer no effects of it, ſo much as in the leaſt alteration of ſpeech, or motion of my eye: and to be eſpecially careful of it, with reſpect to any of our family.

47. Reſolved, to endeavor to my utmoſt to deny whatever is not moſt agreeable to a good, and univerſally ſweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented, eaſy, compaſſionate, generous, humble, meek, modeſt, ſubmiſſive, obliging, diligent and induſtrious, charitable, even, patient, moderate, forgiving, ſincere temper; and to do at all times what ſuch a temper would lead me to. Examine ſtrictly every week, whether I have done ſo.

48. Reſolved, conſtantly, with the utmoſt niceneſs and diligence, and the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny, to be looking into the ſtate of my ſoul, that I may know whether I have truly an intereſt in Chriſt or no; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence reſpecting this to repent of.

50. Reſolved, I will act ſo as I think I ſhall judge would have been beſt, and moſt prudent, when I come into the future world.

52. I frequently hear perſons in old age ſay how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: Reſolved, that I will live juſt ſo as I can think I ſhall wiſh I had done, ſuppoſing I live to old age.

54. When-

54. Whenever I hear any thing ſpoken in converſation of any perſon, if I think it would be praiſe-worthy in me, Reſolved to endeavor to imitate it.

55. Reſolved, to endeavor to my utmoſt to act as I can think I ſhould do, if I had already ſeen the happineſs of Heaven, and Hell torments.

56. Reſolved, never to give over, nor in the leaſt to ſlacken my fight with my corruptions, however unſucceſsful I may be.

57. Reſolved, when I fear misfortunes and adverſities, to examine whether I have done my duty, and reſolve to do it; and let it be juſt as providence orders it, I will, as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty and my ſin.

62. Reſolved, never to do any thing but duty; and then according to Eph. vi. 6, 7, 8. do it willingly and cheerfully as unto the Lord, and not to man; knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the ſame ſhall he receive of the Lord.

65. Reſolved, very much to exerciſe myſelf in this all my live long, *viz.* with the greateſt openneſs I am capable of, to declare my ways to God, and lay open my ſoul to him: all my ſins, temptations, difficulties, ſorrows, fears, hopes, deſires, and every thing, and every circumſtance; according to Dr. Manton's 27th ſermon on the cxix Pſalm.

67. Reſolved, after afflictions, to inquire, what I am the better for them, what good I have got by them, and what I might have got by them. *

* The Reſolutions are ſeventy in number. But part of them are here tranſcribed, as a ſpecimen of the whole. The number here affixed to them, is that by which they are numbered in the original manuſcript; and retained here for the ſake of the references made to ſome of them in the diary, as the reader will preſently ſee.

SECTION II.

Extracts from his PRIVATE DIARY.

SATURDAY, *December* 22, 1722. This day revived by God's ſpirit. Affected with the ſenſe of the excellency of holineſs. Felt more exerciſe of love to Chriſt than uſual.

Have

Have alſo felt ſenſible repentance of ſin, becauſe it was committed againſt ſo merciful and good a God. This night made the 37th Reſolution.

Sabbathday night, Dec. 23. Made the 38th Reſolution.

Monday, Dec. 24. Higher thoughts than uſual of the excellency of Jeſus Chriſt and his kingdom.

Wedneſday, January 2, 1722—3. Dull. I find by experience, that let me make reſolutions, and do what I will, with never ſo many inventions, it is all nothing, and to no purpoſe at all, without the motions of the Spirit of God: for if the Spirit of God ſhould be as much withdrawn from me always, as for the week paſt, notwithſtanding all I do, I ſhould not grow; but ſhould languiſh, and miſerably fade away.—There is no dependence upon myſelf. It is to no purpoſe to reſolve, except we depend on the grace of God; for if it were not for his mere grace, one might be a very good man one day, and a very wicked one the next.

Sabbathday, January 6, at night. Much concerned about the improvement of precious time. Intend to live in continual mortification, without ceaſing, as long as in this world.

Tueſday, January 8, in the morning. Higher thoughts than uſual, of the excellency of Chriſt, and felt an unuſual repentance of ſin therefrom.

Wedneſday, January 9, at night. Decayed. I am ſometimes apt to think, I have a great deal more of holineſs than I have. I find now and then, that abominable corruption which is directly contrary to what I read of eminent Chriſtians.——How deceitful is my heart! I take up a ſtrong reſolution, but how ſoon does it weaken!

Thurſday, January 10, about noon. Reviving. 'Tis a great diſhonor to Chriſt, in whom I hope I have an intereſt, to be uneaſy at my worldly ſtate and condition. When I ſee the proſperity of others, and that all things go eaſy with them; the world is ſmooth to them, and they are happy in many reſpects, and very proſperous, or are advanced to much honor, &c. to grudge and envy them, or be the leaſt uneaſy at it; to wiſh or long for the ſame proſperity, and that it would ever be ſo with me. Wherefore concluded always to rejoice in every one's proſperity, and to expect for myſelf no happineſs of that nature as long as I live; but depend upon afflictions, and betake myſelf entirely to another happineſs.

I think I find myſelf much more ſprightly and healthy, both in body and mind, for my ſelf denial in eating, drinking, and ſleeping.

I think it would be advantageous every morning to conſider my buſineſs and temptations; and what ſins I ſhall be expoſed to that day; and to make a reſolution how to improve the day, and to avoid thoſe ſins. And ſo at the beginning of every week, month and year.

I never knew before what was meant by not ſetting our hearts upon theſe things. 'Tis not to care about them, to depend upon them, to afflict ourſelves much with fears of loſing them, nor pleaſe ourſelves with expectation of obtaining them, or hope of the continuance of them. At night made the 41ſt Reſolution.

Saturday, January 12, in the morning. I have this day ſolemnly renewed my baptiſmal covenant and ſelf-dedication, which I renewed when I was received into the communion of the church. I have been before God; and have given myſelf, all that I am and have to God, ſo that I am not in any reſpect my own: I can challenge no right in myſelf, I can challenge no right in this underſtanding, this will, theſe affections that are in me; neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members: No right to this tongue, theſe hands, nor feet: no right to theſe ſenſes, theſe eyes, theſe ears, this ſmell or taſte. I have given myſelf clear away, and have not retained any thing as my own. I have been to GOD this morning, and told him that I gave myſelf *wholly* to him. I have given every power to him; ſo that for the future I will challenge no right in myſelf, in any reſpect. I have expreſly promiſed him, and do now promiſe Almighty God, that by his grace I will not. I have this morning told him, that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing elſe as any part of my happineſs, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the conſtant rule of my obedience: and would fight with all my might againſt the world, the fleſh, and the devil, to the end of my life. And did believe in Jeſus Chriſt, and receive him as a Prince and a Saviour; and would adhere to the faith and obedience of the goſpel, how hazardous and difficult ſoever the profeſſion and practice of it may be. That I did receive the bleſſed Spirit as my teacher, ſanctifier and only comforter; and cheriſh all his motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort and aſſiſt me. This I have done. And I pray God, for the

ſake

ſake of Chriſt, to look upon it as a ſelf-dedication; and to receive me now as entirely his own, and deal with me in all reſpects as ſuch; whether he afflicts me or proſpers me, or whatever he pleaſes to do with me, who am his. Now, henceforth I am not to act in any reſpect as my own.—I ſhall act as my own, if I ever make uſe of any of my powers to any thing that is not to the glory of God, and don't make the glorifying him my whole and entire buſineſs; if I murmur in the leaſt at afflictions; if I grieve at the proſperity of others; if I am any way uncharitable; if I am angry becauſe of injuries; if I revenge: If I do any thing, purely to pleaſe myſelf, or if I avoid any thing for the ſake of my eaſe: If I omit any thing becauſe it is great ſelf-denial: If I truſt to myſelf: If I take any of the praiſe of any good that I do, or rather GOD does by me; or if I am any way proud. This day made the 42d and 43d Reſolutions.

Monday, January 14.—The dedication I made of myſelf to my God, on Saturday laſt, has been exceeding uſeful to me. I thought I had a more ſpiritual inſight into the ſcripture, reading the 8th chapter to the Romans, than ever in my life before.

Great inſtances of mortification are deep wounds given to the body of ſin, hard blows that make him ſtagger and reel: we thereby get great ground and footing againſt him.—While we live without great inſtances of mortification and ſelf-denial, the old man keeps whereabouts he was; for he is ſturdy and obſtinate, and will not ſtir for ſmall blows. After the greateſt mortifications, I always find the greateſt comfort.

Suppoſing there was never but one compleat Chriſtian, in all reſpects of a right ſtamp, having chriſtianity ſhining in its true luſtre, at a time in the world; Reſolved to act juſt as I would do, if I ſtrove with all my might to be that one, that ſhould be in my time.

Tueſday, January 15. It ſeemed yeſterday, the day before and Saturday, that I ſhould always retain the ſame reſolutions to the ſame height, but alas, how ſoon do I decay! O, how weak, how infirm, how unable to do any thing am I! What a poor, inconſiſtent, what a miſerable wretch, without the aſſiſtance of God's ſpirit! While I ſtand, I am ready to think I ſtand in my own ſtrength, and upon my own legs; and I am ready to triumph over my enemies, as if it were I myſelf that cauſed them to flee: When alas! I am but a poor infant,

upheld

upheld by Jeſus Chriſt; who holds me up, and gives me liberty to ſmile to ſee my enemies flee, when he drives them before me; and ſo I laugh, as though I myſelf did it, when it is only Jeſus Chriſt leads me along, and fights himſelf againſt my enemies. And now the Lord has a little left me, and how weak do I find myſelf! O, let it teach me to depend leſs on myſelf, to be more humble, and to give more of the praiſe of my ability to Jeſus Chriſt. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?

Saturday, February 16. I do certainly know that I love holineſs, ſuch as the goſpel requires.

At night. I have been negligent for the month paſt in theſe three things; I have not been watchful enough over my appetite in eating and drinking; in riſing too late a mornings; and in not applying myſelf with applications enough to the duty of ſecret prayer.

Sabbathday, February 17, near ſunſet. Renewedly promiſed, that I will accept of God, for my whole portion; and that I will be contented, whatever elſe I am denied. I will not murmur, nor be grieved, whatever proſperity, upon any account, I ſee others enjoy, and I am denied.

Saturday, March 2. O, how much pleaſanter is humility than pride! O, that God would fill me with exceeding great humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all pride! The pleaſures of humility are really the moſt refined, inward and exquiſite delights in the world. How hateful is a proud man! How hateful is a worm that lifts up itſelf with pride! What a fooliſh, ſilly, miſerable, blind, deceived, poor worm am I, when pride works!

Wedneſday, March 6, near ſun-ſet. Felt the doctrines of election, free grace, and of our not being able to do any thing without the grace of God; and that holineſs is entirely, throughout, the work of God's ſpirit, with more pleaſure than before.

Monday morning, April 1. I think it beſt not to allow myſelf to laugh at the faults, follies and infirmities of others.

Saturday night, April 7. This week I found myſelf ſo far gone, that it ſeemed to me, that I ſhould never recover more. Let God of his mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to ſink and decay! I know, O Lord, that without thy help, I ſhall fall innumerable times, notwithſtanding all my reſolutions, how often ſoever repeated.

Saturday

Saturday night, *April* 14. I could pray more heartily this night, for the forgiveneſs of my enemies, than ever before.

Wedneſday, *May* 1, forenoon. Laſt night I came home, after my melancholy parting from New-York.

I have always, in every different ſtate of life, I have hitherto been in, thought the troubles and difficulties of that ſtate, to be greater than thoſe of any other, that I propoſed to be in; and when I have altered with aſſurance of mending myſelf, I have ſtill thought the ſame; yea, that the difficulties of that ſtate, are greater than thoſe of that I left laſt. Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw my thoughts, affections, deſires and expectations, intirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly ſtate; where there is fulneſs of joy; where reigns heavenly, ſweet, calm and delightful love without alloy; where there are continually the deareſt expreſſions of this love: Where there is the enjoyment of the perſons loved, without ever parting: Where thoſe perſons, who appear ſo lovely in this world, will really be inexpreſſibly more lovely, and full of love to us. How ſweetly will the mutual lovers join together to ſing the praiſes of God and the Lamb! How full will it fill us with joy to think, this enjoyment, theſe ſweet exerciſes, will never ceaſe or come to an end, but will laſt to all eternity.

Remember, after journeys, removes, overturnings and alterations in the ſtate of my life, to reflect and conſider, whether therein I have managed the beſt way poſſible, reſpecting my ſoul? And before ſuch alterations, if foreſeen, to reſolve how to act.

Thurſday, *May* 2. I think it a very good way to examine dreams every morning when I awake, what are the nature, circumſtances, principles and ends of my imaginary actions and paſſions in them, to diſcern what are my chief inclinations, &c.

Saturday night, *May* 4. Although I have in ſome meaſure ſubdued a diſpoſition to chide and fret, yet I find a certain inclination, which is not agreeable to chriſtian ſweetneſs of temper and converſation: either by too much dogmaticalneſs, too much of the egotiſm; a diſpoſition to be telling of my own diſlike and ſcorn; and freedom from thoſe that are innocent, yea common infirmities of men; and many other ſuch like things. O that God would help me to diſcern all the flaws and defects of my temper and converſation, and help

me

me in the difficult work of amending them: And that he would fill me ſo full of chriſtianity, that the foundation of all theſe diſagreeable irregularities may be deſtroyed, and the contrary ſweetneſſes and beauties may of themſelves naturally follow.

Sabbathday, May 5, in the morning. This day made the 47th reſolution.

Sabbathday, May 12. I think I find in my heart to be glad from the hopes I have that my eternity is to be ſpent in ſpiritual and holy joys, ariſing from the manifeſtation of God's love, and the exerciſe of holineſs and a burning love to him.

Saturday night, May 18. I now plainly perceive what great obligations I am under to love and honour my parents. I have great reaſon to believe, that their counſel and education have been my making: notwithſtanding, in the time of it, it ſeemed to do me ſo little good. I have good reaſon to hope that their prayers for me, have been in many things very powerful and prevalent; that God has in many things, taken me under his care and guidance, proviſion and direction, in anſwer to their prayers for me. I was never made ſo ſenſible of it as now.

Wedneſday, May 22, in the morning. *Memorandum.* To take ſpecial care of theſe following things; evil ſpeaking, fretting, eating, drinking and ſleeping, ſpeaking ſimple verity, joining in prayer, ſlightineſs in ſecret prayer, liſtleſneſs and negligence, and thoughts that cheriſh ſin.

Saturday, May 25, in the morning. As I was this morning reading the ſeventeenth reſolution, it was ſuggeſted to me, that if I was now to die, I ſhould wiſh that I had prayed more that God would make me know my ſtate, whether it be good or bad; and that I had taken more pains to ſee and narrowly ſearch into this matter. Wherefore, *Mem.* For the future moſt nicely and diligently to look into our old divines opinions concerning converſion. Made the forty-eighth reſolution.

Friday, June 1, afternoon. I have abundant cauſe, O my merciful father, to love thee ardently, and greatly to bleſs and praiſe thee, that thou haſt heard me in my earneſt requeſt, and haſt ſo anſwered my prayer for mercy to keep from decay and ſinking. O, graciouſly, of thy mere goodneſs, ſtill continue to pity my miſery, by reaſon of my ſinfulneſs. O my dear Redeemer, I commit myſelf, together with my prayer and thankſgiving into thine hand.

Monday,

Monday, July 1. Again confirmed by experience of the happy effects of ſtrict temperance, with reſpect both to body and mind. Reſolved for the future to obſerve rather more of meekneſs, moderation and temper in diſputes.

Thurſday, July 18, near ſun-ſet. Reſolved to endeavor to make ſure of that ſign the apoſtle James gives of a perfect man, Jam. iii. 2. "If any man offend not in word, the ſame "is a perfect man, and able alſo to bridle the whole body."

Monday, July 22. I ſee there is danger of my being drawn into tranſgreſſion by the power of ſuch temptations as a fear of ſeeming uncivil, and of offending friends. Watch againſt it.

Tueſday, July 23. When I find thoſe groanings which cannot be uttered, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of; and thoſe ſoul-breakings, for the longing it hath, the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of, (Pſal. cxix. 20.) to humour and promote them to the utmoſt of my power, and be not weary of earneſtly endeavouring to vent my deſires.

To count it all joy when I have occaſion of great ſelf-denial, becauſe then I have a glorious opportunity of giving deadly wounds to the body of ſin, and greatly confirming and eſtabliſhing the new nature: To ſeek to mortify ſin, and increaſe in holineſs: theſe are the beſt opportunities, according to January 14.

To improve afflictions of all kinds as bleſſed opportunities of forcibly bearing on in my chriſtian courſe, notwithſtanding that which is ſo very apt to diſcourage me, and to damp the vigour of my mind, and to make me lifeleſs: Alſo as opportunities of truſting and confiding in God, and getting a habit of that, according to the 57th reſolution. And as an opportunity of rending my heart off from the world, and ſetting it upon Heaven alone. To improve them as opportunities to repent of, and bewail my ſin, and abhor myſelf. And as a bleſſed opportunity to exerciſe patience; to truſt in God, and divert my mind from the affliction, by fixing myſelf in religious exerciſes. Alſo, let me comfort myſelf, that it is the very nature of afflictions to make the heart better; and if I am made better by them, what need I be concerned, however grievous they ſeem for the preſent?

Friday afternoon, *July* 26. To be particularly careful to keep up inviolable a truſt and reliance, eaſe and entire reſt in God in all conditions, according to 57th reſolution; for this I have found to be wonderfully advantageous to me.

Monday,

Monday, July 29. When I am concerned how I ſhall perform any thing to public acceptance, to be very careful that I have it very clear to me, that I do what is duty and prudence in the matter.

Wedneſday, July 31. Never in the leaſt to ſeek to hear ſarcaſtical relations of others faults. Never to give credit to any thing ſaid againſt others, except there is very plain reaſon for it; nor to behave in any reſpect the otherwiſe for it.

Wedneſday, Auguſt 7. To eſteem as ſome advantage that the duties of religion are difficult, and that many difficulties are ſome times to be gone through in the way of duty. Religion is the ſweeter, and what is gained by labour, is abundantly more precious: As a woman loves her child the better for having brought it fourth with travail. And even to Chriſt Jeſus himſelf, his mediatorial glory, his victory and triumph, his kingdom which he hath obtained; how much more glorious is it, how much more excellent and precious, for his having wrought it out by ſuch agonies!

Friday, Auguſt 9. One thing that may be a good help towards thinking profitably in time of vacation is, when I light on a profitable thought, that I can fix my mind on, to follow it as far as poſſibly I can to advantage.

Sabbathday, after meeting, *Auguſt* 11. Reſolved always to do that which I ſhall wiſh I had done, when I ſee others do it. As for inſtance, ſometimes I argue with myſelf, that ſuch an act of good nature, kindneſs, forbearance, or forgiveneſs, &c. is not my duty, becauſe it will have ſuch and ſuch conſequences: yet, when I ſee others do it, then it appears amiable to me, and I wiſh I had done it; and I ſee that none of thoſe feared inconveniences follow.

Tueſday, Auguſt 13. I find it would be very much to advantage, to be thoroughly acquainted with the ſcriptures. When I am reading doctrinal books, or books of controverſy, I can proceed with abundantly more confidence; can ſee upon what footing and foundation I ſtand.

Thurſday, Auguſt 29. The objection my corruptions make againſt doing whatever my hands find to do with my might is, that it is a conſtant mortification. Let this objection by no means ever prevail.

Monday, September 2. There is much folly, when I am quite ſure I am in the right, and others are poſitive in contradicting me, to enter into a vehement or long debate upon it.

Monday,

Monday, September 23. I obſerve that old men ſeldom have any advantage of new diſcoveries ; becauſe they are beſide a way of thinking, they have been ſo long uſed to. Reſolved, if ever I live to years, that I will be impartial to hear the reaſons of all pretended diſcoveries, and receive them if rational, how long ſo ever I have been uſed to another way of thinking.

Thurſday, October 18. To follow the example of Mr. B— who, though he meets with great difficulties, yet undertakes them with a ſmiling countenance, as though he thought them but little ; and ſpeaks of them as if they were very ſmall.

Thurſday, November 26. It is a moſt evil and pernicious practice in meditations on afflictions, to ſit ruminating on the aggravations of the affliction, and reckoning up the evil, dark circumſtances thereof, and dwelling long on the dark ſide ; it doubles and trebles the affliction. And ſo when ſpeaking of them to others, to make them as bad as we can, and uſe our eloquence to ſet forth our own troubles, and are all the while making new trouble, and feeding and pampering the old ; whereas the contrary practice would ſtarve our afflictions. If we dwelt on the light ſide of things in our thoughts, and extenuated them all that poſſibly we could, when ſpeaking of them, we ſhould think little of them ourſelves ; and the affliction would really, in a great meaſure, vaniſh away.

Thurſday night, December 12. If at any time I am forced to tell others of that wherein I think they are ſomething to blame ; for the avoiding the important evil, that would otherwiſe enſue, not to tell it to them, ſo that there ſhall be a probability of their taking it as the effect of little, fretting, angry emotions of mind.

December 31, at night. Concluded never to ſuffer nor expreſs any angry emotions of mind more or leſs, except the honor of God calls for it, in zeal for him, or to preſerve myſelf from being trampled on.

Wedneſday, January 1, 1723—4.

NOT to ſpend too much time in thinking even of important and neceſſary worldly buſineſs. To allow every thing it's proportion of thought, according to it's urgency and importance.

Friday, January 10. (After having wrote conſiderable in a ſhort hand, which he uſed when he would have what he wrote effectually concealed from every body but himſelf, he notes the following words in round hand) Remember to act according to Prov. xii. 23. "A prudent man concealeth know-"lege."

Monday, February 3. Let every thing have the value now, that it will have on a ſick bed: and frequently in my purſuits of whatever kind, let this come into my mind; "How much "ſhall I value this on my death bed?"

Wedneſday, February 5. Have not in time paſt in my prayers, enough inſiſted upon the glorifying God in the world, and the advancement of the kingdom of Chriſt, the proſperity of the church, and the good of men. Determined that this objection is without weight, viz. That it is not likely that God will make great alterations in the whole world, and overturnings in kingdoms and nations, only for the prayers of one obſcure perſon, ſeeing ſuch things uſed to be done in anſwer to the united, earneſt prayers of the whole church: and if my prayers ſhould have ſome influence, it would be but imperceptible and ſmall.

Thurſday, February 6. More convinced than ever of the uſefulneſs of a free religious converſation. I find by converſing on natural philoſophy, I gain knowlege abundance faſter, and ſee the reaſons of things much clearer, than in private ſtudy. Wherefore earneſtly to ſeek at all times for religious converſation; for thoſe that I can with profit and delight and freedom ſo converſe with.

Sabbathday, February 23. If I act according to my reſolution, I ſhall deſire riches no otherwiſe than as they are helpful to religion. But this I determine, as what is really evident from many parts of ſcripture, that to fallen man they have a greater tendency to hurt religion.

Saturday, May 23. How it comes about I know not; but I have remarked it hitherto, that at thoſe times when I have read the ſcripture moſt, I have evermore been moſt lively, and in the beſt frames.

Saturday night, June 6. This week has been a remarkable week with me with reſpect to deſpondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares and diſtraction of mind; being the week I came hither to New-Haven, in order to entrance upon the office of tutor of the college. I have now abundant reaſon to be convinced of the troubleſomeneſs and vexation of the world, and that it never will be another kind of world.

Tueſday,

Tueſday, July 7. When I am giving the Relation of a thing, to abſtain from altering either in the matter or manner of ſpeaking, ſo much, as that if every one afterward ſhould altar as much, it would at laſt come to be properly falſe.

Tueſday, September 2. By a ſparingneſs in diet, and eating, as much as may be, what is light and eaſy of digeſtion, I ſhall doubtleſs be able to think clearer, and ſhall gain time. 1ſt. By lengthening out my life. 2dly. ſhall need leſs time for digeſtion after meals. 3dly. ſhall be able to ſtudy cloſer without wrong to my health. 4thly. ſhall need leſs time to ſleep. 5thly. ſhall ſeldomer be troubled with the head-ach.

Sabbathday, November 22. Conſidering that by-ſtanders always eſpy ſome faults which we do not ſee ourſelves, or at leaſt are not ſo fully ſenſible of: there are many ſecret workings of corruption which eſcape our ſight, and others only are ſenſible of: Reſolved therefore, that I will, if I can by any convenient means, learn what faults others find in me, or what things they ſee in me, that appear any way blame-worthy, unlovely or unbecoming.

SECTION III.

REFLECTION *on the foregoing* EXTRACTS.

THE foregoing extracts were wrote by Mr. Edwards in the 20th and 21ſt years of his age, as appears by the dates. This being kept in mind, the judicious reader will make proper allowance for ſome things, which may appear a little juvenile, or like a young chriſtian, as to the matter, or manner of expreſſion; which would not have been found, had it not have been done in early life. Which, indeed are no blemiſhes, the whole being taken together: as by this, it appears more natural, and the ſtrength of his reſolution, and fervor of mind; and his ſkill and diſcerning in divine things, ſo ſeldom found even in old age, are the more ſtriking. And in this view, we ſhall be led to admire his conſcientious ſtrictneſs, his zeal and painfulneſs, his experience and judgment in true religion, at ſo early an age. For here are not only the moſt convincing evidences of ſincerity and thorough religion, of his engaging in a life devoted to GOD in good earneſt, ſo as to make religion

his

his only buſineſs ; but through his great attention to this matter, he appears to have the judgment and experience of grey hairs.

This is the beginning of a life ſo eminently holy and uſeful as Mr. Edwards's was. He who became one of the greateſt divines in this age ; has had the applauſe and admiration of America, Britain, Holland, and Germany, for his piety, and great judgment and ſkill in divinity ; and has been honored above moſt others in the chriſtian world, in this century ; in his being made the inſtrument of doing ſo much good : He began his life thus : He entered on a public life with ſuch views, ſuch exerciſes, ſuch reſolutions.

This may ſerve as a direction and excitement to thoſe who are young, to devote themſelves to GOD in good earneſt, and enter on the buſineſs of ſtrict and thorough religion without delay : eſpecially thoſe who are looking towards the work of the miniſtry, as they would take the moſt direct, the only way to anſwer the good ends which they profeſs to ſeek.

It is to be lamented, that there is ſo much reaſon to think, there are ſo few inſtances of ſuch early piety in our day. If the proteſtant world abounded with young perſons of this ſtamp ; with young men, who are preparing for the work of the miniſtry, with ſuch a temper, ſuch exerciſes, and ſuch reſolutions, what a delightful proſpect would this afford, of the near approach of happier days, than the church of GOD has ever yet ſeen ! What pleaſing hopes that the great, the merciful head of the church, was about to ſend forth labourers, faithful, ſucceſsful labourers into his harveſt ; and bleſs his people with " Paſtors which ſhall feed them with knowlege and under- " ſtanding !"

But if our youth neglect all proper improvement of the mind ; are ſhy of ſerioufneſs and ſtrict piety ; chooſe to live ſtrangers to it, and keep at a diſtance from all appearance of it ; are wanton, and given to carnal pleaſures ; what a gloomy proſpect does this afford ! If they who enter into the work of the miniſtry ; from a gay, careleſs, and what may juſtly be called a vicious life, betake themſelves to a little ſuperficial ſtudy of divinity, and ſoon begin to preach ; while all the external ſeriouſneſs and zeal they put on, is only from worldly motives ; they being without any inward, experimental acquaintance with ſpiritual, divine things, and even ſo much as any taſte for true divinity ; no wonder if the churches " ſuck dry breaſts ;" and there are many ignorant watchmen.

But, as the beſt comment on the foregoing reſolutions and diary ; and that the reader may have a more particular, full

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and inſtructive view of Mr. Edwards's entrance on a religious life, and progreſs in it, as conſiſting in the views and exerciſes of his mind; a brief account thereof is here inſerted, which was found among his papers, in his own hand-writing: and which, it ſeems, was wrote near twenty years after, for his own private advantage.

SECTION IV.

An Account of his CONVERSION, EXPERIENCES, *and* RELIGIOUS EXERCICES, *given by himſelf.*

I Had a variety of concerns and exerciſes about my ſoul from my childhood; but had two more remarkable ſeaſons of awakening, before I met with that change, by which I was brought to thoſe new diſpoſitions, and that new ſenſe of things, that I have ſince had. The firſt time was when I was a boy, ſome years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my ſoul's ſalvation; and was abundant in duties. I uſed to pray five times a day in ſecret, and to ſpend much time in religious talk with other boys; and uſed to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much ſelf-righteous pleaſure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I, with ſome of my ſchool-mates, joined together and built a booth in a ſwamp, in a very ſecret and retired place, for a place of prayer. And beſides, I had particular ſecret places of my own in the woods, where I uſed to retire by myſelf; and uſed to be from time to time much affected. My affections ſeemed to be lively and eaſily moved, and I ſeemed to be in my element, when engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with ſuch affections, and ſuch a kind of delight, as I then had in religion, and miſtake it for grace.

But in proceſs of time, my convictions and affections wore off; and I entirely loſt all thoſe affections and delights, and left off ſecret prayer, at leaſt as to any conſtant performance of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in ways of ſin.

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Indeed, I was at ſome times very uneaſy, eſpecially towards the latter part of the time of my being at college. 'Till it pleaſed God, in my laſt year at college, at a time when I was in the midſt of many uneaſy thoughts about the ſtate of my ſoul, to ſeize me with a plurify; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and ſhook me over the pit of hell.

But yet, it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of ſin. But God would not ſuffer me to go on with any quietneſs; but I had great and violent inward ſtruggles: 'Till after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, and repeated reſolutions, and bonds that I laid myſelf under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward ſin; and to apply myſelf to ſeek my ſalvation, and practiſe the duties of religion: But without that kind of affection and delight, that I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward ſtruggles and conflicts, and ſelf-reflections. I made ſeeking my ſalvation the main buſineſs of my life. But yet it ſeems to me, I ſought after a miſerable manner: Which has made me ſome times ſince to queſtion, whether ever it iſſued in that which was ſaving; being ready to doubt, whether ſuch miſerable ſeeking was ever ſucceeded. But yet I was brought to ſeek ſalvation, in a manner that I never was before. I felt a ſpirit to part with all things in the world, for an intereſt in Chriſt. My concern continued and prevailed, with many exerciſing thoughts and inward ſtruggles; but yet it never ſeemed to be proper to expreſs my concern that I had, by the name of terror.

From my childhood up, my mind had been wont to be full of objections againſt the doctrine of God's ſovereignty, in chooſing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleaſed; leaving them eternally to periſh, and be everlaſtingly tormented in hell. It uſed to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I ſeemed to be convinced, and fully ſatisfied, as to this ſovereignty of God, and his juſtice in thus eternally diſpoſing of men, according to his ſovereign pleaſure. But never could give an account, how, or by what means, I was thus convinced; not in the leaſt imagining, in the time of it, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's ſpirit in it: but only that now I ſaw further, and my reaſon apprehended the juſtice and reaſonableneſs of it. However, my

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mind reſted in it; and it put an end to all thoſe cavils and objections, that had until then abode with me, all the preceding part of my life. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with reſpect to the doctrine of God's ſovereignty, from that day to this; ſo that I ſcarce ever have found ſo much as the riſing of an objection againſt God's ſovereignty, in the moſt abſolute ſenſe, in ſhewing mercy to whom he will ſhew mercy, and hardening and eternally damning whom he will. God's abſolute ſovereignty, and juſtice, with reſpect to ſalvation and damnation, is what my mind ſeems to reſt aſſured of, as much as of any thing that I ſee with my eyes; at leaſt it is ſo at times. But I have often times ſince that firſt conviction, had quite another kind of ſenſe of God's ſovereignty, than I had then. I have often ſince, not only had a conviction, but a *delightful* conviction. The doctrine of God's ſovereignty has very often appeared, an exceeding pleaſant, bright and ſweet doctrine to me: and abſolute ſovereignty is what I love to aſcribe to God. But my firſt conviction was not with this.

The firſt that I remember that ever I found any thing of that ſort of inward, ſweet delight in God and divine things, that I have lived much in ſince, was on reading thoſe words, 1 Tim. i. 17. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, inviſi-" ble, the only wiſe God, be honor and glory for ever and " ever, Amen." As I read the words, there came into my ſoul, and was as it were diffuſed through it, a ſenſe of the glory of the Divine Being; a new ſenſe, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of ſcripture ſeemed to me as theſe words did. I thought with myſelf, how excellent a Being that was; and how happy I ſhould be, if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up to God in Heaven, and be as it were ſwallowed up in Him. I kept ſaying, and as it were ſinging over theſe words of ſcripture to myſelf; and went to prayer, to pray to God that I might enjoy him; and prayed in a manner quite different from what I uſed to do; with a new ſort of affection. But it never came into my thought, that there was any thing ſpiritual, or of a ſaving nature in this.

From about that time, I began to have a new kind of apprehenſions and ideas of Chriſt, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of ſalvation by him. I had an inward, ſweet ſenſe of theſe things, that at times came into my heart;

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and my ſoul was led away in pleaſant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged, to ſpend my time in reading and meditating on Chriſt; and the beauty and excellency of his perſon, and the lovely way of ſalvation, by free grace in him. I found no books ſo delightful to me, as thoſe that treated of theſe ſubjects. Thoſe words, Cant. ii. 1, uſed to be abundantly with me: "I am the roſe of Sharon, "the lilly of the valleys." The words ſeemed to me, ſweetly to repreſent, the lovelineſs and beauty of Jeſus Chriſt. And the whole book of Canticles uſed to be pleaſant to me; and I uſed to be much in reading it, about that time. And found, from time to time, an inward ſweetneſs, that uſed, as it were, to carry me away in my contemplations; in what I know not how to expreſs otherwiſe, than by a calm, ſweet abſtraction of ſoul from all the concerns of this world; and a kind of viſion, or fixed ideas and imaginations, or being alone in the mountains, or ſome ſolitary wilderneſs, far from all mankind, ſweetly converſing with Chriſt, and wrapt and ſwallowed up in God. The ſenſe I had of divine things, would often of a ſudden as it were, kindle up a ſweet burning in my heart; an ardor of my ſoul, that I know not how to expreſs.

Not long after I firſt began to experience theſe things, I gave an account to my father, of ſome things that had paſſed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the diſcourſe we had together. And when the diſcourſe was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a ſolitary place in my father's paſture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looked up on the ſky and clouds; there came into my mind, a ſweet ſenſe of the glorious majeſty and grace of God, that I know not how to expreſs. I ſeemed to ſee them both in a ſweet conjunction: majeſty and meekneſs joined together: it was a ſweet and gentle, and holy Majeſty; and alſo a majeſtic meekneſs; an awful ſweetneſs; a high, and great, and holy gentleneſs.

After this my ſenſe of divine things gradually increaſed, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward ſweetneſs. The appearance of every thing was altered: there ſeemed to be, as it were, a calm, ſweet caſt, or appearance of divine glory, in almoſt every thing. God's excellency, his wiſdom, his purity and love, ſeemed to appear in every thing; in the ſun, moon and ſtars; in the clouds, and blue ſky; in the graſs, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which uſed greatly to fix my mind. I often uſed to ſit and view the moon,

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for a long time; and ſo in the day time, ſpent much time in viewing the clouds and ſky, to behold the ſweet glory of God in theſe things: in the mean time, ſinging forth with a low voice, my contemplations of the creator and redeemer. And ſcarce any thing, among all the works of nature, was ſo ſweet to me as thunder and lightning. Formerly, nothing had been ſo terrible to me. I uſed to be a perſon uncommonly terrified with thunder: and it uſed to ſtrike me with terror, when I ſaw a thunder-ſtorm riſing. But now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God at the firſt appearance of a thunder-ſtorm. And uſed to take the opportunity at ſuch times, to fix myſelf to view the clouds, and ſee the lightnings play, and hear the majeſtic and awful voice of God's thunder: which often times was exceeding entertaining, leading me to ſweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. And while I viewed, uſed to ſpend my time, as it always ſeemed natural to me, to ſing or chant forth my meditations; to ſpeak my thoughts in ſoliloquies, and ſpeak with a ſinging voice.

I felt then a great ſatisfaction as to my good eſtate. But that did not content me. I had vehement longings of ſoul after God and Chriſt, and after more holineſs; wherewith my heart ſeemed to be full, and ready to break: which often brought to my mind, the words of the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. cxix. 28. "My ſoul breaketh for the longing it hath." I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God ſooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; I was almoſt perpetually in the contemplation of them. Spent moſt of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year. And uſed to ſpend abundance of my time, in walking alone in the woods, and ſolitary places, for meditation, ſoliloquy and prayer, and converſe with God. And it was always my manner, at ſuch times, to ſing forth my contemplations. And was almoſt conſtantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer ſeemed to be natural to me; as the breath, by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent.

The delights which I now felt in things of religion, were of an exceeding different kind, from thoſe forementioned, that I had when I was a boy. They were totally of another kind; and what I then had no more notion or idea of, than one born blind has of pleaſant and beautiful colours. They were of a more inward, pure, ſoul-animating and refreſhing

nature. Thoſe former delights, never reached the heart; and did not ariſe from any ſight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taſte of the ſoul-ſatisfying, and life-giving good, there is in them.

My ſenſe of divine things ſeemed gradually to increaſe, until I went to preach at New-York; which was about a year and a half after they began. While I was there, I felt them, very ſenſibly, in a much higher degree, than I had done before. My longings after God and holineſs, were much increaſed. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly chriſtianity, appeared exceeding amiable to me. I felt in me a burning deſire to be in every thing a compleat chriſtian; and conformed to the bleſſed image of Chriſt: and that I might live in all things, according to the pure, ſweet and bleſſed rules of the goſpel. I had an eager thirſting after progreſs in theſe things. My longings after it, put me upon purſuing and preſſing after them. It was my continual ſtrife day and night, and conſtant inquiry, how I ſhould be more holy, and live more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and diſciple of Chriſt. I ſought an encreaſe of grace and holineſs, and that I might live an holy life, with vaſtly more earneſtneſs, than ever I ſought grace, before I had it. I uſed to be continually examining myſelf, and ſtudying and contriving for likely ways and means, how I ſhould live holily, with far greater diligence and earneſtneſs, than ever I purſued any thing in my life: But with too great a dependence on my own ſtrength; which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done ſince, my extreme feebleneſs and impotence, every manner of way; and the innumerable and bottomleſs depths of ſecret corruption and deceit, that there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager purſuit after more holineſs; and ſweet conformity to Chriſt.

The Heaven I deſired was a Heaven of holineſs; to be with God, and to ſpend my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Chriſt. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on Heaven, and the enjoyments of thoſe there; and living there in perfect holineſs, humility and love. And it uſed at that time to appear a great part of the happineſs of Heaven, that there the ſaints could expreſs their love to Chriſt. It appeared to me a great clog and hindrance and burden to me, that what I felt within, I could not expreſs to God, and give vent to, as I deſired. The inward ardor of my ſoul,

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ſeemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I uſed often to think, how in Heaven, this ſweet principle ſhould freely and fully vent and expreſs itſelf. Heaven appeared to me exceeding delightful as a world of love. It appeared to me, that all happineſs conſiſted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

I remember the thoughts I uſed then to have of holineſs. I remember I then ſaid ſometimes to myſelf, I do certainly know that I love holineſs, ſuch as the goſpel preſcribes. It appeared to me, there was nothing in it but what was raviſhingly lovely. It appeared to me, to be the higheſt beauty and amiableneſs, above all other beauties: that it was a divine beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing elſe, was like mire, filth and defilement, in compariſon of it.

Holineſs, as I then wrote down ſome of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a ſweet, pleaſant, charming, ſerene, calm nature. It ſeemed to me, it brought an inexpreſſible purity, brightneſs, peacefulneſs and raviſhment to the ſoul: and that it made the ſoul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleaſant flowers; that is all pleaſant, delightful and undiſturbed; enjoying a ſweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the ſun. The ſoul of a true chriſtian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like ſuch a little white flower, as we ſee in the ſpring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening it's boſom, to receive the pleaſant beams of the ſun's glory; rejoicing as it were, in a calm rapture; diffuſing around a ſweet fragrancy; ſtanding peacefully and lovingly, in the midſt of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their boſoms, to drink in the light of the ſun.

There was no part of creature-holineſs, that I then, and at other times, had ſo great a ſenſe of the lovelineſs of, as humility, brokenneſs of heart and poverty of ſpirit: and there was nothing that I had ſuch a ſpirit to long for. My heart as it were panted after this, to lie low before God, and in the duſt; that I might be nothing, and that God might be all; that I might become as a little child.

While I was there at New-York, I ſometimes was much affected with reflections on my paſt life, conſidering how late it was, before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then: and once ſo as to weep abundantly, and for a conſiderable time together.

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On January 12, 1722—3. I made a ſolemn dedication of myſelf to God, and wrote it down; giving up myſelf, and all that I had to God; to be for the future in no reſpect my own; to act as one that had no right to himſelf, in any reſpect. And ſolemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing elſe as any part of my happineſs, nor acting as if it were: and his law for the conſtant rule of my obedience: engaging to fight with all my might, againſt the world, the fleſh and the devil, to the end of my life. But have reaſon to be infinitely humbled, when I conſider, how much I have failed of anſwering my obligation.

I had then abundance of ſweet religious converſation in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith, and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to thoſe, in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but ſuch as were holy, and the diſciples of the bleſſed Jeſus.

I had great longings for the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom in the world. My ſecret prayer uſed to be in great part taken up in praying for it. If I heard the leaſt hint of any thing that happened in any part of the world, that appeared to me, in ſome reſpect or other, to have a favorable aſpect on the intereſt of Chriſt's kingdom, my ſoul eagerly catched at it; and it would much animate and refreſh me. I uſed to be earneſt to read public news-letters, mainly for that end; to ſee if I could not find ſome news favorable to the intereſt of religion in the world.

I very frequently uſed to retire into a ſolitary place, on the banks of Hudſon's river, at ſome diſtance from the city, for contemplation on divine things, and ſecret converſe with God; and had many ſweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converſe of the things of God; and our converſation uſed much to turn on the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accompliſh for his church in the latter days.

I had then, and at other times, the greateſt delight in the holy ſcriptures, of any book whatſoever. Oftentimes in reading it, every word ſeemed to touch my heart. I felt an harmony between ſomething in my heart, and thoſe ſweet and powerful words. I ſeemed often to ſee ſo much light, exhibited by every ſentence, and ſuch a refreſhing raviſhing food

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communicated, that I could not get along in reading. Uſed oftentimes to dwell long on one ſentence, to ſee the wonders contained in it; and yet almoſt every ſentence ſeemed to be full of wonders.

I came away from New-York in the month of April, 1723, and had a moſt bitter parting with Madam Smith and her ſon. My heart ſeemed to ſink within me, at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed ſo many ſweet and pleaſant days. I went from New-York to Weathersfield by water. As I ſailed away, I kept ſight of the city as long as I could; and when I was out of ſight of it, it would affect me much to look that way, with a kind of melancholy mixed with ſweetneſs. However, that night after this ſorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at Weſtcheſter, where we went aſhore to lodge: and had a pleaſant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was ſweet to me to think of meeting dear chriſtians in Heaven, where we ſhould never part more. At Saybrook we went aſhore to lodge on Saturday, and there kept Sabbath; where I had a ſweet and refreſhing ſeaſon, walking alone in the fields.

After I came home to Windſor, remained much in a like frame of my mind, as I had been in at New-York; but only ſome times felt my heart ready to ſink, with the thoughts of my friends at New-York. And my refuge and ſupport was in contemplations on the heavenly ſtate; as I find in my diary of May 1, 1723. It was my comfort to think of that ſtate, where there is fulneſs of joy; where reigns heavenly, ſweet, calm and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the deareſt expreſſions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the perſons loved, without ever parting; where theſe perſons that appear ſo lovely in this world, will really be inexpreſſibly more lovely, and full of love to us. And how ſweetly will the mutual lovers join together to ſing the praiſes of God and the Lamb! How full will it fill us with joy, to think, that this enjoyment, theſe ſweet exerciſes will never ceaſe or come to an end; but will laſt to all eternity!

Continued much in the ſame frame in the general, that I had been in at New-York, till I went to New-Haven, to live there as tutor of the college; having one ſpecial ſeaſon of uncommon ſweetneſs: particularly once at Bolton, in a journey from Boſton, walking out alone in the fields. After I went to

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New-Haven, I ſunk in religion ; my mind being diverted from my eager and violent purſuits after holineſs, by ſome affairs that greatly perplexed and diſtracted my mind.

In September, 1725, was taken ill at New-Haven ; and endeavoring to go home to Windſor, was ſo ill at the North Village, that I could go no further : where I lay ſick for about a quarter of a year. And in this ſickneſs, God was pleaſed to viſit me again with the ſweet influences of his ſpirit. My mind was greatly engaged there on divine, pleaſant contemplations, and longings of ſoul. I obſerved that thoſe who watched with me, would often be looking out for the morning, and ſeemed to wiſh for it. Which brought to my mind thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt, which my ſoul with ſweetneſs made its own language. " My ſoul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that " watch for the morning, I ſay, more than they that watch " for the morning." And when the light of the morning came, and the beams of the ſun came in at the windows, it refreſhed my ſoul from one morning to another. It ſeemed to me to be ſome image of the ſweet light of God's glory.

I remember, about that time, I uſed greatly to long for the converſion of ſome that I was concerned with. It ſeemed to me, I could gladly honor them, and with delight be a ſervant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy.

But ſome time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my mind, with ſome temporal concerns, that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my ſoul ; and went on through various exerciſes, that it would be tedious to relate, that gave me much more experience of my own heart, than ever I had before.

Since I came to this town, [Northampton] I have often had ſweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections, and the excellency of Jeſus Chriſt. God has appeared to me, a glorious and lovely Being, chiefly on the account of his holineſs. The holineſs of God has always appeared to me the moſt lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's abſolute ſovereignty, and free grace, in ſhewing mercy to whom he would ſhew mercy ; and man's abſolute dependance on the operations of God's holy ſpirit, have very often appeared to me as ſweet and glorious doctrines. Theſe doctrines have been much my delight, God's ſovereignty has ever appeared to me, as great

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part of his glory. It has often been ſweet to me to go to God, and adore him as a ſovereign God, and aſk ſovereign mercy of Him.

I have loved the doctrines of the goſpel: They have been to my ſoul like green paſtures. The goſpel has ſeemed to me to be the richeſt treaſure; the treaſure that I have moſt deſired and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of ſalvation by Chriſt, has appeared in a general way, glorious and excellent, and moſt pleaſant and beautiful. It has often ſeemed to me, that it would in a great meaſure ſpoil Heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me, Iſai. xxxii. 2. "A man ſhall be an hiding "place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt," &c.

It has often appeared ſweet to me, to be united to Chriſt; to have Him for my head, and to be a member of his body: and alſo to have Chriſt for my teacher and prophet. I very often think with ſweetneſs and longings and pantings of ſoul, of being a little child, taking hold of Chriſt, to be led by Him thro' the wilderneſs of this world. That text, Matt. xviii. at the beginning, has often been ſweet to me, "Except ye be con- "verted, and become as little children, &c." I love to think of coming to Chriſt, to receive ſalvation of him, poor in ſpirit, and quite empty of ſelf; humbly exalting Him alone; cut entirely off from my own root, and to grow into, and out of Chriſt, to have God in Chriſt to be all in all; and to live by faith on the Son of God, a life of humble, unfeigned confidence in Him. That ſcripture has often been ſweet to me, Pſal. cxv. 1. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name "give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's ſake." And thoſe words of Chriſt, Luke x. 21. "In that hour Jeſus rejoi- "ced in ſpirit, and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Hea- "ven and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe "and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes: even ſo "Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight." That Sovereignty of God that Chriſt rejoiced in, ſeemed to me to be worthy to be rejoiced in; and that rejoicing of Chriſt, ſeemed to me to ſhew the excellency of Chriſt, and the ſpirit that he was of.

Sometimes only mentioning a ſingle word, cauſes my heart to burn within me: or only ſeeing the name of Chriſt, or the name of ſome attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he ſubſiſts in three perſons; Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.

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The ſweeteſt joys and delights I have experienced, have not been thoſe that have ariſen from a hope of my own good eſtate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the goſpel. When I enjoy this ſweetneſs, it ſeems to carry me above the thoughts of my own ſafe eſtate. It ſeems at ſuch times a loſs that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious, pleaſant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myſelf and my own good eſtate.

My heart has been much on the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom in the world. The hiſtories of the paſt advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, have been ſweet to me. When I have read hiſtories of paſt ages, the pleaſanteſt thing in all my reading has been, to read of the kingdom of Chriſt being promoted. And when I have expected in my reading, to come to any ſuch thing, I have lotted upon it all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted, with the ſcripture promiſes and prophecies, of the future glorious advancement of Chriſt's kingdom on earth.

I have ſometimes had a ſenſe of the excellent fulneſs of Chriſt, and his meetneſs and ſuitableneſs as a Saviour; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thouſands. And his blood and atonement has appeared ſweet, and his righteouſneſs ſweet; which is always accompanied with an ardency of ſpirit, and inward ſtrugglings and breathings and groanings, that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myſelf, and ſwallowed up in Chriſt.

Once, as I rid out into the woods for my health, *Anno* 1737; and having lit from my horſe in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer; I had a view, that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God; as mediator between God and man; and his wonderful, great, full, pure and ſweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condeſcenſion. This grace, that appeared to me ſo calm and ſweet, appeared great above the Heavens. The perſon of Chriſt appeared ineffably excellent, with an excellency great enough to ſwallow up all thought and conception. Which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me, the greater part of the time, in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt withal, an ardency of ſoul to be, what I know not otherwiſe how to expreſs, than to be emptied and annihilated; to lie in the duſt, and to be full of Chriſt alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to truſt in him;

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live npon him; to ſerve and follow him, and to be totally wrapt up in the fulneſs of Chriſt; and to be perfectly ſanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have ſeveral other times, had views very much of the ſame nature, and that have had the ſame effects.

I have many times had a ſenſe of the glory of the third perſon in the Trinity, in his office of ſanctifier; in his holy operations communicating divine light and life to the ſoul. God in the communications of his holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and ſweetneſs; being full and ſufficient to fill and ſatisfy the ſoul: pouring forth itſelf in ſweet communications, like the ſun in its glory, ſweetly and pleaſantly diffuſing light and life.

I have ſometimes had an affecting ſenſe of the excellency of the word of God, as a word of life; as the light of life; a ſweet, excellent, life-giving word: accompanied with a thirſting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

I have often ſince I lived in this town, had very affecting views of my own ſinfulneſs and vileneſs; very frequently ſo as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, ſometimes for a conſiderable time together: ſo that I have often been forced to ſhut myſelf up. I have had a vaſtly greater ſenſe of my own wickedneſs, and the badneſs of my heart, ſince my converſion, than ever I had before. It has often appeared to me, that if God ſhould mark iniquity againſt me, I ſhould appear the very worſt of all mankind; of all that have been ſince the beginning of the world to this time: and that I ſhould have by far the loweſt place in hell. When others that have come to talk with me about their ſoul concerns, have expreſſed the ſenſe they have had of their own wickedneſs, by ſaying that it ſeemed to them that they were as bad as the Devil himſelf; I thought their expreſſions ſeemed exceeding faint and feeble, to repreſent my wickedneſs. I thought I ſhould wonder, that they ſhould content themſelves with ſuch expreſſions as theſe, if I had any reaſon to imagine, that their ſin bore any proportion to mine. It ſeemed to me, I ſhould wonder at my ſelf, if I ſhould expreſs *my* wickedneſs in ſuch feeble terms as they did.

My wickedneſs, as I am in myſelf, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and infinitely ſwallowing up all thought and imagination; like an infinite deluge, or infinite mountains over my head. I know not how to expreſs better, what my ſins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and

multiplying infinite by infinite. I go about very often, for this many years, with theſe expreſſions in my mind, and in my mouth, "infinite upon infinite—infinite upon infinite!" When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedneſs, it looks like an abyſs infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free grace, exalted and raiſed up to the infinite height of all the fulneſs and glory of the great JEHOVAH, and the arm of his power and grace ſtretched forth, in all the majeſty of his power, and in all the glory of his ſovereignty; I ſhould appear ſunk down in my ſins infinitely below hell itſelf, far beyond ſight of every thing, but the piercing eye of God's grace, that can pierce even down to ſuch a depth, and to the bottom of ſuch an abyſs.

And yet, I am not in the leaſt inclined to think, that I have a greater conviction of ſin than ordinary. It ſeems to me, my conviction of ſin is exceeding ſmall, and faint. It appears to me enough to amaze me, that I have no more ſenſe of my ſin. I know certainly, that I have very little ſenſe of my ſinfulneſs. That my ſins appear to me ſo great, do not ſeem to me to be, becauſe I have ſo much more conviction of ſin than other chriſtians, but becauſe I am ſo much worſe, and have ſo much more wickedneſs to be convinced of. When I have had theſe turns of weeping and crying for my ſins, I thought I knew in the time of it, that my repentance was nothing to my ſin.

I have greatly longed of late, for a broken heart, and to lie low before God. And when I aſk for humility of God, I can not bear the thoughts of being no more humble, than other chriſtians. It ſeems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be ſuitable for them; yet it would be a vile ſelf-exaltation in me, not to be the loweſt in humility of all mankind. Others ſpeaking of their longing to be humbled to the duſt. Though that may be a proper expreſſion for them, I always think for myſelf, that I ought to be humbled down below hell. It is an expreſſion that it has long been natural for me to uſe in prayer to God. I ought to lie infinitely low before God.

It is affecting to me to think, how ignorant I was, when I was a young chriſtian, of the bottomleſs, infinite depths of wickedneſs, pride, hypocriſy and deceit left in my heart.

I have vaſtly a greater ſenſe of my univerſal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and ſtrength, and meer good pleaſure, of late, than I uſed formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteouſneſs. The thought of any comfort or joy, ariſing in me, on any conſideration, or

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reflection on my own amiableneſs, or any of my performances or experiences, or any goodneſs of heart or life, is nauſeous and deteſtable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and ſelf-righteous ſpirit; much more ſenſibly, than I uſed to be formerly. I ſee that ſerpent riſing and putting forth it's head, continually, every where, all around me.

Though it ſeems to me, that in ſome reſpects I was a far better chriſtian, for two or three years after my firſt converſion, than I am now; and lived in a more conſtant delight and pleaſure: yet of late years, I have had a more full and conſtant ſenſe of the abſolute ſovereignty of God, and a delight in that ſovereignty; and have had more of a ſenſe of the glory of Chriſt, as a mediator, as revealed in the goſpel. On one Saturday night in particular, had a particular diſcovery of the excellency of the goſpel of Chriſt, above all other doctrines; ſo that I could not but ſay to my ſelf; "This is my choſen light, my choſen "doctrine:" and of Chriſt, "This is my choſen prophet." It appeared to me to be ſweet beyond all expreſſion, to follow Chriſt, and to be taught and enlightened and inſtructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him.

Another Saturday night, January 1738—9, had ſuch a ſenſe, how ſweet and bleſſed a thing it was, to walk in the way of duty, to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God; that it cauſed me to break forth into a kind of a loud weeping, which held me ſome time; ſo that I was forced to ſhut myſelf up, and faſten the doors. I could not but as it were cry out, "How happy are they which "do that which is right in the ſight of GOD! They are bleſ-"ſed indeed, they are the happy ones! I had at the ſame time, a very affecting ſenſe, how meet and ſuitable it was that God ſhould govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleaſure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done.

PART

PART III.

Containing a Hiſtory of his Life from his ENTERING on the Work of the Miniſtry, unto his DEATH.

SECTION I.

His GENERAL MANNER of LIFE.

MR. EDWARDS made a ſecret of his private devotion, and therefore it cannot be particularly known: though there is much evidence, that he was punctual, conſtant and frequent in ſecret prayer, and often kept days of faſting and prayer in ſecret; and ſet a part time for ſerious, devout meditations on ſpiritual and eternal things, as part of his religious exerciſe in ſecret. It appears by his diary that in his youth he determined to attend ſecret prayer more than twice a day, when circumſtances would allow. He was, ſo far as it can be known, much on his knees in ſecret, and in devout reading God's word, and meditation upon it. And his conſtant, ſolemn converſe with God in theſe exerciſes of ſecret religion made his face, as it were, to ſhine before others. His appearance, his countenance, words and whole demeanor, (though without any thing of affected grimace and ſour auſterity) was attended with a ſerioufneſs, gravity and ſolemnity, which was the natural genuine indication and expreſſion of a deep, abiding ſenſe of divine things on his mind, and of his living conſtantly in the fear of God.

Agreeable to his reſolutions, he was very careful and abſtemious in eating and drinking; as doubtleſs it was neceſſary ſo great a ſtudent, and a perſon of ſo delicate and tender a bodily make as he was, ſhould be, in order to be comfortable and uſeful. When he had, by careful obſervation, found what kind, and what quantity of diet, beſt ſuited his conſtitution, and rendered him moſt fit to purſue his work, he was very ſtrict and exact in complying with it; and in this reſpect *lived by rule*; and herein conſtantly practiſed great ſelf-denial: Which he alſo did in his conſtant early riſing, in order to redeem time for his ſtudy. He uſed himſelf to riſe by four or between four and five in the morning.

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Though he was of a tender and delicate conſtitution, yet few ſtudents are capable of cloſe application more hours in a day than he. He commonly ſpent thirteen hours every day in his ſtudy. His moſt uſual diverſion in the ſummer was riding on horſeback and walking. He would commonly, unleſs diverted by company, ride two or three miles after dinner to ſome lonely grove, where he would diſmount and walk a while. At which times he generally carried his pen and ink with him, to note any thought that ſhould be ſuggeſted, which he choſe to retain and purſue, as what promiſed ſome light on any important ſubject. In the winter he was wont almoſt daily to take an ax and chop wood moderately for the ſpace of half an hour or more.

He had an uncommon thirſt for knowlege, in the purſuit of which, he ſpared no coſt nor pains. He read all the books, eſpecially books of divinity, that he could come at, from which he could hope to get any help in his purſuit of knowlege. And in this, he confined not himſelf to authors of any particular ſect or denomination; yea took much pains to come at the books of the moſt noted writers, who advance a ſcheme of divinity moſt contrary to his own principles. But he ſtudied the BIBLE more than all other books, and more than moſt other divines do. His uncommon acquaintance with the Bible appears in his ſermons, and in moſt of his publications: and his great pains in ſtudying it are manifeſt in his manuſcript notes upon it; of which a more particular account may be given hereafter. He took his religious principles from the Bible, and not from any human ſyſtem or body of divinity. Though his principles were *Calviniſtic*, yet he called no man, father. He thought and judged for himſelf, and was truly very much of an original. This is evident by what he publiſhed in his life-time, and is yet more ſo by his MSS. Many volumes of which he has left; and the reader may expect a more particular account of them in the ſequel. For reading was not the only method he took to improve his mind; but he did this much by writing; without which, it is probable no ſtudent can make improvements to the beſt advantage. Agreeable to reſolution 11th, he applied himſelf with all his might to find out the truth: He ſearched for underſtanding and knowlege, as for ſilver, and digged for it, as for hid treaſures. Every thought on any ſubject, which appeared to him worth purſuing and preſerving, he purſued, as far as he then could, with

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his pen in his hand. Thus he was all his days, like the buſy bee, collecting from every opening flower, and ſtoring up a ſtock of knowlege, which was indeed ſweet to him, as the honey and the honey-comb. And as he advanced in years and in knowlege, his pen was more and more employed, and his manuſcripts grew much faſter on his hands.

He was thought by ſome, who had but a ſlight acquaintance with him to be ſtiff and unſociable; but this was owing to want of better acquaintance. He was not a man of many words indeed, and was ſome-what reſerved among ſtrangers, and thoſe on whoſe candor and friendſhip he did know he could rely. And this was probably owing to two things. Firſt, the ſtrict guard he ſet over his tongue from his youth, which appears by his reſolutions, taking great care never to uſe it in any way that might prove miſchievous to any; never to *ſin with his tongue*; or to improve it in idle, trivial and impertinent talk, which generally makes up a great part of the converſation of thoſe who are full of words in all companies. He was ſenſible that in the multitude of words there wanteth not Sin: and therefore refrained his lips, and habituated himſelf to *think* before he *ſpoke*, and to propoſe ſome good end even in all his words; which led him to be above many others, agreeable to St. James's advice, *ſlow to ſpeak*. Secondly, this was in part the effect of his bodily conſtitution. He poſſeſſed but a comparative ſmall ſtock of animal life: his animal ſpirits were low and he had not ſtrength of lungs to ſpare, that would be neceſſary in order to make him what would be called, an affable, facecious gentleman, in all companies. They who have a great flow of animal ſpirits, and ſo can ſpeak with more eaſe and leſs expence, may doubtleſs lawfully practice free converſation in all companies for a lower end, (e. g. to pleaſe and render themſelves acceptable) than he, who has not ſuch a ſtock to expend upon. It becomes *him* to reſerve what he has, for higher and more important ſervice. Beſides, the want of animal ſpirits lays a man under a *natural* inability to that freedom of converſation, at all times, and in whatever company he is; which thoſe of more life naturally go into; and the greateſt degree of a ſociable diſpoſition, humility and benevolence, will not remove this obſtacle.

He was not forward to enter into any diſpute among ſtrangers, and in companies where were perſons of different ſentiments; as he was ſenſible that ſuch diſputes are generally unprofitable

profitable, and often ſinful and of bad conſequence; and he thought he could diſpute to the beſt advantage with his pen in his hand: Yet he was always free to give his ſentiments on any ſubject propoſed to him; and remove any difficulties or objections offered by way of enquiry, as lying in the way of what he looked upon to be the truth. But how groundleſs the imputation of *ſtiff* and *unſociable* was, his known and tried friends beſt knew. They alwas found him eaſy of acceſs, kind and condeſcending; and though not talkative, yet affable and free. Among ſuch whoſe candor and friendſhip he had experienced, he threw off the reſerve, and was moſt open and free; quite patient of contradiction, while the utmoſt oppoſition was made to his ſentiments, that could be by any plauſible arguments or objections. And indeed, he was on all occaſions quite ſociable and free withal, who had any ſpecial buſineſs with him.

In his conduct in his family he practiſed that conſcientious exactneſs which was perſpicuous in all his ways. He maintained a great eſteem and regard for his amiable and excellent conſort. Much of the tender and kind was expreſſed in his converſation with her and conduct towards her. He was wont frequently to admit her into his ſtudy, and converſe freely with her on matters of religion. And he uſed commonly to pray with her in his ſtudy, at leaſt once a day, unleſs ſomething extraordinary prevented. The time in which this uſed to be commonly attended, was juſt before going to bed, after prayers in the family. As he roſe very early himſelf, he was wont to have his family up in ſeaſon in the morning; after which, before the family entered on the buſineſs of the day, he attended on family prayers. When a chapter in the Bible was read, commonly by candle-light in the winter; upon which he aſked his children queſtions according to their age and capacity; and took occaſion to explain ſome paſſages in it, or enforce any duty recommended, &c. as he thought moſt proper.

He was careful and thorough in the government of his children; and, as a conſequence of this, they reverenced, eſteemed and loved him. He took ſpecial care to begin his government of them in ſeaſon. When they firſt diſcovered any conſiderable degree of will and ſtubbornneſs, he would attend to them till he had thoroughly ſubdued them and brought them to ſubmit. And ſuch prudent thorough diſcipline, exerciſed with the greateſt calmneſs, and commonly without

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ſtriking a blow, being redeated once or twice, was generally ſufficient for that child; and effectually eſtabliſhed his parental authority, and produced a chearful obedience ever after.

He kept a watchful eye over his children, that he might admoniſh them of the *firſt* wrong ſtep, and direct them in the right way. He took opportunities to treat with them in his ſtudy, ſingly and particularly about their own ſoul's concerns; and to give them warning, exhortation and direction, as he ſaw occaſion. He took much pains to inſtruct them in the principles of religion; in which he made uſe of the *Aſſembly's Shorter Catechiſm:* not meerly by taking care that they learned it by heart; but by leading them into an underſtanding of the doctrines therein taught, by aſking them queſtions on each anſwer, and explaining it to them. His uſual time to attend this was on the evening before the ſabbath. And as he believed that the Sabbath or holy time began at ſun-ſet the evening before the day, he ordered his family to finiſh all their ſecular buſineſs by that time or before; when they were all called together, and a pſalm was ſung and prayer attended, as an introduction to the ſanctifying the Sabbath. This care and exactneſs effectually prevented that intruding on holy time, by attending on ſecular buſineſs, too common in families where the evening before the Sabbath is pretended to be obſerved.

He was a great enemy to young people's unſeaſonable company-keeping and frolicking, as he looked upon it a great means of corrupting and ruining youth. And he thought the excuſe many parents make for tolerating their children in it, (viz. that it is the cuſtom, and others children practiſe it, which renders it difficult, and even impoſſible to reſtrain theirs) was inſufficient and frivolous: and manifeſted a great degree of ſtupidity, on ſuppoſition the practice was hurtful and pernicious to their ſouls. And when ſome of his children grew up he found no difficulty in reſtraining them from this pernicious practice; but they cheerfully complied with the will of their parents herein. He allowed not his children to be from home after nine o'clock at night, when they went abroad to ſee their friends and companions. Neither were they allowed to ſit up much after that time, in his own houſe, when any came to make them a viſit. If any gentleman deſired acquaintance with his daughters; after handſomely introducing himſelf, by properly conſulting the parents, he was allowed all proper opportunity for it; a room and fire if needed: but muſt not intrude on the proper hours of reſt and ſleep, or the religion and order of the family.

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He had a ſtrict and inviolable regard to juſtice in all his dealings with his neighbours, and was very careful to provide for things honeſt in the ſight of all men; ſo that ſcarcely a man had any dealings with him, that was not conſcious of his uprightneſs. He appeared to have a ſacred regard to truth in his words, both in promiſes and narrations, agreeable to his reſolutions. This doubtleſs was one reaſon why he was not ſo full of words as many are. No man feared to rely on his veracity.

He was cautious in chuſing his *intimate friends*, and therefore had not many that might properly be called ſuch. But to them he ſhewed himſelf friendly in a peculiar manner. He was indeed a faithful friend, and able above moſt others to keep a ſecret. To them he diſcovered himſelf more than to others, led them into his views and ends in his conduct in particular inſtances: by which they had abundant evidence that he well underſtood human nature; and that his general reſervedneſs, and many particular inſtances of his conduct, which a ſtranger might impute to ignorance of men, were really owing to his uncommon knowlege of mankind.

His converſation with his friends was always ſavory and profitable: In this he was remarkable, and almoſt ſingular.—He was not wont to ſpend his time with them, in ſcandal, evil-ſpeaking and back-biting, or in fooliſh jeſting, idle chat, and telling ſtories: But his mouth was that of the juſt, which bringeth forth wiſdom, and his lips diſperſed knowlege. His tongue was as the pen of a ready writer, while he converſed about important, heavenly, divine things, which his heart was ſo full of, in ſuch a natural and free manner, as to be moſt entertaining and inſtructive: ſo that none of his friends could enjoy his company without inſtruction and profit, unleſs it was by their own fault.

His great benevolence to mankind diſcovered itſelf, among other ways, by the uncommon regard he ſhewed to liberality, and charity to the poor and diſtreſſed. He was much in recommending this, both in his public diſcourſes and private converſation. He often declared it to be his opinion, that profeſſed chriſtians, in theſe days are greatly deficient in this duty; and much more ſo, than in moſt other parts of external chriſtianity. He often obſerved how much this is ſpoken of, recommended and encouraged in the holy ſcripture, eſpecially in the New-Teſtament. And it was his opinion, that every particular church ought by frequent and liberal contributions, to maintain a public ſtock, that might be ready for the poor and neceſſitous

members of that church: and that the principal buſineſs of deacons is to take care of the poor in the faithful and judicious diſtribution and improvement of the church's temporals, lodged in their hands. And he did not content himſelf with only recommending charity to others, but practiſed it much himſelf: Though, according to his maſter's advice, he took great care to conceal his deeds of charity; by which means doubtleſs moſt of his alms-deeds will be unknown till the reſurrection, which if known, would prove him to be as great an inſtance of charity as any that can be produced in this age. This is not mere conjecture, but is evident many ways. He was forward to give on all public occaſions of charity, though when it could properly be done, he always concealed the ſum given. And ſome inſtances of his giving more privately have accidentally come to the knowlege of others, in which his liberality appeared in a very extraordinary degree. One of the inſtances was this. Upon hearing that a poor obſcure man, whom he never ſaw, or any of his kindred, was by an extraordinary bodily diſorder, brought to great ſtraits; he, unaſked, gave a conſiderable ſum to a friend to be delivered to the diſtreſſed perſon; having firſt required a promiſe of him, that he would let neither the perſon, who was the object of his charity, nor any one elſe know by whom it was given. This may ſerve both as an inſtance of his extraordinary charity, and of his great care to conceal it. *

Mr. Edwards had the moſt univerſal character of a *good preacher* of almoſt any miniſter in this age. There were but few that heard him, who did not call him a good preacher, however they might diſlike his religious principles, and be much offended at the ſame truths when delivered by others: And moſt admired him above all that ever they heard. His eminency as a preacher ſeems to be owing to the following things.

Firſt, The great pains he took in compoſing his ſermons, eſpecially in the firſt part of his life. As by his early riſing, and conſtant attention to his ſtudy, he had more time than moſt others; ſo he ſpent more time in making his ſermons. He wrote moſt of his ſermons all out, for near twenty years after he firſt began to preach; though he did not wholly confine himſelf to his notes in his delivering them.

Secondly,

* As both the giver, and the object of his charity are dead, and all the ends of the propoſed ſecrecy are anſwered; it is thought not inconſiſtent with the above mentioned promiſe, to make known the fact, as it is here related.

Secondly, His great acquaintance with divinity, his ſtudy and knowlege of the bible. His extenſive and univerſal knowlege, and great clearneſs of thought, enabled him to handle every ſubject with great judgment and propriety, and to bring out of his treaſury things new and old. Every ſubject he handled was inſtructive, plain, entertaining and profitable; which was much owing to his being maſter of the ſubject, and his great ſkill to treat it in a moſt natural, eaſy, and profitable manner. None of his compoſures were dry ſpeculations, or unmeaning harangues, or words without ideas. When he dwelt on thoſe truths which are much controverted and oppoſed by many, which was often the caſe, he would ſet them in ſuch a natural and eaſy light, and every ſentiment from ſtep to ſtep, would drop from his lips, attended with ſuch clear and ſtriking evidence, both from ſcripture and reaſon, as even to force the aſſent of every attentive hearer.

Thirdly, His excellency as a preacher was very much the effect of his great acquaintance with his own heart, his inward ſenſe and high reliſh of divine truths, and the high exerciſe of true, experimental religion. This gave him a great inſight into human nature: He knew what was in man, both the ſaint and the ſinner. This helped him to ſkill, to lay truth before the mind, ſo as not only to convince the judgment, but touch the heart and conſcience; and enabled him to ſpeak out of the abundance of his heart, what he knew, and teſtify what he had ſeen and felt. This gave him a taſte and diſcerning, without which he could not have been able to fill his ſermons, as he did, with ſuch ſtriking, affecting ſentiments, all ſuited to ſolemnize, move, and rectify the heart of the hearer. His ſermons were well connected, not uſually long, and commonly a large part taken up in the improvement; which was cloſely connected with the ſubject, and conſiſted in ſentiments naturally flowing from it.

But no deſcription of his ſermons will give the reader the idea of them which they have who ſat under his preaching, or have even read ſome of his diſcourſes which are in print. There is a great number now in manuſcript, which are probably as worthy the view of the public, and at leaſt tend as much to inſtruct and quicken chriſtians, as moſt that have been publiſhed in this century.

His appearance in the deſk was with a good grace, and his delivery eaſy, natural and very ſolemn. He had not a ſtrong,

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loud voice; but appeared with ſuch gravity and ſolemnity, and ſpake with ſuch diſtinctneſs, clearneſs and preciſion; his words were ſo full of ideas, ſet in ſuch a plain and ſtriking light, that few ſpeakers have been ſo able to demand the attention of an audience as he. His words often diſcovered a great degree of inward fervor, without much noiſe or external emotion, and fell with great weight on the minds of his hearers. He made but little motion of his head or hands in the deſk, but ſpake ſo as to diſcover the motion of his own heart, which tended in the moſt natural and effectual manner to move and affect others.

As he wrote his ſermons out at large for many years, and always wrote a conſiderable part of moſt of his public diſcourſes; ſo he carried his notes into the deſk with him, and read the moſt that he had wrote; yet he was not ſo confined to his notes, when he had wrote at large, but that, if ſome thoughts were ſuggeſted while he was ſpeaking, which did not occur when writing, and appeared to him pertinent and ſtriking, he would deliver them; and that with as great propriety and fluency, and oftner with greater pathos, and attended with a more ſenſible good effect on his hearers, than all he had wrote.

Though, as has been obſerved, he was wont to read ſo conſiderable a part of what he delivered; yet he was far from thinking this the beſt way of preaching in general; and looked upon his uſing his notes ſo much as he did, a deficiency and infirmity. And in the latter part of his life was inclined to think it had been better, if he had never accuſtomed himſelf to uſe his notes at all. It appeared to him that preaching wholly without notes, agreeable to the cuſtom in moſt proteſtant countries, and what ſeems evidently to have been the manner of the apoſtles and primitive miniſters of the goſpel, was by far the moſt natural way; and had the greateſt tendency on the whole, to anſwer the end of preaching: and ſuppoſed that none who had talents equal to the work of the miniſtry, was incapable of ſpeaking memoriter, if he took ſuitable pains for this attainment from his youth. He would have the young preacher write all his ſermons, or at leaſt moſt of them, out at large; and inſtead of reading them to his hearers, take pains to commit them to memory. Which, though it would require a great deal of labour at firſt, yet would ſoon become eaſier by uſe, and help him to ſpeak more correctly and freely, and be of great ſervice to him all his days.

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His prayers were indeed *extempore*. He was the fartheſt from any appearance of a form, as to his words and manner of expreſſion of almoſt any man. He was quite ſingular and inimitable in this, by any who have not a ſpirit of real and undiſſembled devotion. Yet he always expreſſed himſelf with decency and propriety. He appeared to have much of the grace and ſpirit of prayer; to pray with the ſpirit and with the underſtanding: and he performed this part of duty much to the acceptance and edification of thoſe who joined with him. He was not wont, in ordinary caſes to be long in his prayers: an error which he obſerved was often hurtful to public and ſocial prayer, as it tends rather to damp than promote true devotion.

He kept himſelf quite free from worldly cares. He gave himſelf wholly to the work of the miniſtry, and entangled not himſelf with the affairs of this life. He left the particular over-ſight and direction of the temporal concerns of his family, almoſt entirely to Mrs. Edwards; who was better able than moſt of her ſex to take the whole care of them on her hands. He was leſs acquainted with moſt of his temporal affairs than many of his neighbours; and ſeldom knew when and by whom his forage for winter was gathered in, or how many milk kine he had; whence his table was furniſhed, &c.

He did not make it his cuſtom to viſit his people in their own houſes, unleſs he was ſent for by the ſick; or he heard that they were under ſome ſpecial affliction. Inſtead of viſiting from houſe to houſe, he uſed to preach frequently at private meetings in particular neighbourhoods; and often call the young people and children to his own houſe: when he uſed to pray with them and treat with them in a manner ſuited to their years and circumſtances. And he catechiſed the children in public every Sabbath in the ſummer. And he uſed ſometimes to propoſe queſtions to particular young perſons in writing, for them to anſwer after a proper time given them to prepare. In putting out theſe queſtions, he endeavoured to ſuit them to the age, genius and abilities of thoſe to whom they were given. His queſtions were generally ſuch as required but a ſhort anſwer; and yet could not be anſwered without a particular knowlege of ſome hiſtorical part of the ſcripture; and therefore led, and even obliged perſons to ſtudy the bible.

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He did neglect viſiting his people from houſe to houſe, becauſe he did not look upon it, in ordinary caſes, to be one part of the work of the goſpel miniſter. But he ſuppoſed that miniſters ſhould, with reſpect to this, conſult their own talents and circumſtances, and viſit more or leſs, according to the degree in which they could hope hereby to promote the great ends of the goſpel miniſtry. He obſerved that ſome miniſters had a talent at entertaining and profiting by occaſional viſits among their people. They have words at will, and a knack at introducing profitable, religious diſcourſe in a free, natural, and, as it were undeſigned way. He ſuppoſed ſuch had a call to ſpend a great deal of their time in viſiting their people. But he looked on his talents to be quite otherwiſe. He was not able to enter into a free converſation with every perſon he met with, and in an eaſy manner turn it to what topick he pleaſed, without the help of others, and, as it may be, againſt their inclination. He therefore found that his viſits of this kind muſt be in a great degree unprofitable. And as he was ſettled in a great town, it would take up a great part of his time to viſit from houſe to houſe; which he thought he could ſpend in his ſtudy to much more valuable purpoſes, and ſo as much better to promote the great ends of his miniſtry. For it appeared to him, that he could do the greateſt good to ſouls, and moſt promote the intereſt of Chriſt by preaching and writing, and converſing with perſons under religious impreſſions in his ſtudy; where he encouraged all ſuch to repair; where, they might be ſure, in ordinary caſes, to find him: and to be allowed eaſy acceſs to him, and where they were treated with all deſirable tenderneſs, kindneſs and familiarity. In times therefore of the out-pouring of God's ſpirit, and the revival of religion among his people, his ſtudy was thronged with perſons to lay open their ſpiritual concerns to him, and ſeek his advice and direction: whom he received and converſed with, with great freedom and pleaſure, and had the beſt opportunity to deal in the moſt particular manner with each one.

HE was a ſkilful guide to ſouls under ſpiritual difficulties. And was therefore ſought unto not only by his own people, but by many who lived ſcores of miles off. He became ſuch an able guide, partly by his own experimental acquaintance with divine things, and unwearied ſtudy of God's word; and partly by his having ſo much concern with ſouls under ſpiri-

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tual troubles. For he had not been ſettled in the work of the miniſtry many years before the ſpirit of God was wonderfully poured out on his people, by which a great concern about their ſouls became almoſt univerſal; and a great number were hopefully the ſubjects of ſaving converſion. This was principally in the year 1734. A particular account of which has been wrote by him, entitled, *A faithful narrative of the ſurprizing work of God in the converſion of many hundred ſouls in* Northampton. Which has been printed in England, Germany and America; to which the reader muſt be refered.

And there was another remarkable time of the outpouring of God's ſpirit in the years 1740, and 1741, in which Northampton partook largely; though not excluſive of moſt other parts of the land. Mr. Edwards in this time had to deal not only with his own people, but with multitudes of others. The hearing that the ſame things were at Northampton ſome years before, and the ſame Mr. Edwards had for knowlege, piety, and a great acquaintance with experimental religion, naturally led both miniſters and people, in almoſt all parts of New-England, to look to him for direction and aſſiſtance, in this extraordinary time. Being in this time earneſtly ſolicited by the miniſters and people of many places to come and preach among them, he went to many; though he was not able to gratify all who deſired him. And his preaching was attended with great ſucceſs.

And as many of the miniſters and people in New-England, had been unacquainted with ſuch things as then appeared, they were greatly expoſed to run wild, as it were, and actually did, by the ſubtle temptations of the devil, taking advantage of the ignorance and wickedneſs of men's hearts, go into great extremes both as oppoſers and friends to the work of God. Mr. Edwards was greatly helpful by his direction and aſſiſtance againſt the two oppoſite extremes, both in converſion, preaching and writing. His publications on this occaſion were eſpecially of great and extenſive ſervice. Of which it may be proper to give ſome account here.

The firſt is a ſermon preached at New-Haven, Sept. 10, 1741, On *the diſtinguiſhing marks of the ſpirit of God*, &c.

In the year 1742, he publiſhed a book of five parts, intitled, *Some thoughts concerning the preſent revival of religion in New-England, and the way in which it ought to be acknowleged and promoted*, &c.

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In the year 1746, he publiſhed a *Treatiſe on Religious Affections*, All which might be juſtly conſidered by the church of chriſt as a voice behind them ſaying, "This is the way, walk "therein." Eſpecially the laſt-mentioned book, which has been eſteemed by many the beſt that has been wrote on that ſubject; ſetting the diſtinction between true and falſe religion in the moſt clear and ſtriking light.

To the ſame purpoſe, is *The life of the Rev. Mr.* DAVID BRAINERD, *with reflections and obſervations thereon*; publiſhed by Mr. EDWARDS in the year 1749.

Mr. Edwards was what by ſome is called a rigid *Calviniſt*. Thoſe doctrines of Calviniſm, which have been moſt objected againſt, and given the greateſt offence, appeared to him as ſcriptural, reaſonable and important as any; and he thought that to give them up, was in effect to give up all. And therefore he looked upon thoſe who called themſelves *Calviniſts*, that were for palliating the matter, by, as it were, triming off the knots of Calviniſm, that they might conform it more to the taſte of thoſe who are moſt diſpoſed to object againſt it, were really giving up and betraying the cauſe they pretend to eſpouſe: and were paving the way not only to Arminianiſm, but to Deiſm. For if theſe doctrines, in the whole length and breadth of them were relinquiſhed, he did not ſee, where a man could ſet his foot down with conſiſtency and ſafety, ſhort of Deiſm, or even Atheiſm itſelf; or rather univerſal Scepticiſm.

He judged that nothing was wanting, but to have theſe doctrines properly ſtated and judiciouſly and well defended, in order to their appearing moſt agreeable to reaſon and common ſenſe, as well as the doctrines of revelation; and that this therefore was the only effectual method to convince, or ſilence and ſhame the oppoſers of them. All will be able to ſatisfy themſelves of the truth of this, by reading his treatiſe *on Juſtification*, and his two laſt books on *the Freedom of the Will*, and *Original Sin*.

In this view of things, he thought it of importance that miniſters ſhould be very critical in examining candidates for the miniſtry, with reſpect to their *principles*, as well as their religious diſpoſition and morals. And on this account he met with conſiderable difficulty and oppoſition in ſome inſtances. His opinion was, that an erroneous or unfaithful miniſter was likely

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to do more hurt than good to the church of Chriſt; and therefore he could not have any hand in introducing a man into the miniſtry, unleſs he appeared *ſound in the faith*, and manifeſted to a judgment of charity, a *diſpoſition to be faithful*.

SECTION II.

His DISMISSION from *Northampton*, with the *occaſion* and *circumſtances* of it.

MR. EDWARDS was very happy in the eſteem and love of his people for many years, and there was the greateſt proſpect of his living and dying ſo. He was the laſt miniſter almoſt in New-England that would have been pitched upon to be oppoſed and renounced by his people. But by what has come to paſs with reſpect to this, we have an inſtructive leſſon on the inſtability of all human affairs, and the unreaſonableneſs of truſting in man.

In the year 1744, Mr. Edwards was informed that ſome of the young perſons in town, who were members of the church, had books in keeping, which they improved to promote laſcivious and obſcene diſcourſe among the young people. And upon enquiring, a number of perſons were found to teſtify, that they had heard one and another from time to time talk obſcenely; as what they were led to by reading a book or books, which they had among them. Upon which Mr. Edwards thought the brethren of the church ought to look into the matter. And in order to introduce it, he preached a ſermon from Heb. xii. 15, 16. "Looking diligently, leſt any man fail "of the grace of God, leſt any root of bitterneſs ſpringing up "trouble you, and thereby many be defiled: leſt there be any "fornicator, or profane perſon as Eſau, &c." After ſermon he deſired the brethren of the church to ſtay, and told them what information he had got; and propoſed whether they thought proper to take any meaſures to examine into the matter. They with one conſent and much zeal, manifeſted it to be their opinion, that it ought to be enquired into. And proceeded to chooſe a number of men, to aſſiſt their paſtor in examining into the affair. Upon which Mr. Edwards appointed

the time for their meeting at his houſe: and then read a catalogue of the names of young perſons, whom he deſired to come to his houſe at the ſame time. Some were the accuſed, and ſome witneſſes; but it was not then declared of which number any particular perſon was.

When the names were publiſhed, it appeared, that there were but few of the conſiderable families in town, to which none of the perſons named did belong, or were nearly related. Whether this was the occaſion of the alteration or not, before the day appointed came, a great number of heads of families altered their minds (yea many condemned what they had done, before they got home to their own houſes) and declared, they did not think proper to proceed as they had done; that their children ſhould not be called to an account in ſuch a way for ſuch things, &c. &c. And the town was ſuddenly all on a blaze. This ſtrengthened the hands of the accuſed, and ſome refuſed to appear, and others that did appear, behaved unmannerly, and with a great degree of inſolence, and contempt of the authority of the church. And little or nothing could be done further in the affair.

This was the occaſion of weakening Mr. Edwards's hands in the work of the miniſtry, eſpecially among the young people: with whom by this means he greatly loſt his influence! This ſeemed in a great meaſure to put an end to Mr. Edwards's uſefulneſs at Northampton, and doubtleſs laid a foundation, and will help to account for the ſurprizing events which will by and by be related. To be ſure he had no great viſible ſucceſs after this; but the influences of God's ſpirit were greatly withheld, and ſecurity and carnality much increaſed among them. That great and ſingular degree of viſible religion and good order which had been found among them, ſoon began gradually to decay; and the youth have ſince been more wanton and diſſolute.

Mr. Stoddard, Mr. Edwards's grand-father and predeceſſor in the work of the miniſtry, was of the opinion, that unconverted perſons had a right in the ſight of God, or conſidered as ſuch, to the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper; that therefore it was their duty to come to that ordinance, though they knew they had no true goodneſs, or goſpel holineſs. He maintained, that viſible chriſtianity does not conſiſt in a profeſſion or appearance of that wherein true holineſs or real chriſtianity conſiſts. That therefore the profeſſion which perſons make in order to be received as viſible members of Chriſt's church, ought

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not to be ſuch as to expreſs or imply a real compliance with, or conſent to the terms of the covenant of grace, or a hearty embracing the goſpel. So that they who really reject Jeſus Chriſt, and diſlike the goſpel way of ſalvation in their hearts, and know that this is true of themſelves, may make the profeſſion without lying and hypocriſy. Accordingly, he endeavoured to form a ſhort profeſſion for perſons to make in order to be admitted into the church and come to the ſacrament, anſwerable to this principle. And it took place and was practiſed upon in Northampton; and perſons were admitted into the church, and to the ſacrament, not under the notion of their being true ſaints, or that they had any real goodneſs.

Mr. Stoddard's appearing to maintain this principle made a great noiſe in the country; and he was oppoſed as introducing ſomething contrary to the principles and practice of almoſt all the churches in New-England. And the matter was publicly controverted between him and Dr. Increaſe Mather, of Boſton. However, through Mr. Stoddard's great influence and aſcendance over the people at Northampton, it was introduced there though not without oppoſition. And his principles by degrees ſpread very much among miniſters and people in that country, and in other parts of New-England; though no church except Northampton publicly and profeſſedly acted upon this principle by altering the profeſſion that thoſe made, who were admitted to the ſacrament, to ſuit it to ſuch a notion: but required of all who joined to the church a profeſſion of that wherein true chriſtianity or real godlineſs conſiſts. And of late years his opinion that perſons who have no real goodneſs, but are in a chriſtleſs ſtate, and know themſelves to be ſo, may make a chriſtian profeſſion and come to the ſacrament, without lying and hypocriſy; and that they have a right, and it is their duty ſo to do, has greatly ſpread in the country.

Mr. Edwards had ſome heſitation about this matter when he firſt ſettled at Northampton, and afterwards; but did not receive ſuch a degree of conviction, that the admitting perſons into the church, who made no pretence to real godlineſs was wrong, as to prevent his practiſing upon it with a good conſcience, for ſome years. But at length his doubts about the matter greatly increaſed, which put him upon examining it more thoroughly than he had ever before done, by ſearching the ſcripture, and reading and examining ſuch books, as were written to defend the admiſſion of perſons to ſacraments, without a

profeſſion

profeſſion of ſaving faith. And the reſult was a full conviction that it was wrong, and that he could not practice upon it with a good conſcience. He was fully convinced that to be a viſible chriſtian was to put on the viſibility or appearance of a real chriſtian; that the profeſſion of chriſtianity was a profeſſion of that, wherein real chriſtianity conſiſts; was therefore a profeſſion of true reſpect of Chriſt, and a hearty embracing the goſpel, &c. That therefore no perſon who rejected Chriſt in his heart, could make ſuch a profeſſion conſiſtent with truth. And therefore, as the ordinance of the Lord's ſupper was inſtituted for none but viſible profeſſing chriſtians, none but thoſe who are real chriſtians have a real right in the ſight of God to come to that ordinance: and that none ought to be admitted thereto, who do not make a profeſſion of real chriſtianity, and ſo cannot be received in a judgment of charity as true friends to Jeſus Chriſt, or real ſaints. *

When Mr. Edwards's ſentiments were known, in the ſpring of the year 1744, it gave great offence, and the town was put into a great ferment: and before he was heard in his own defence, or it was known by many what his principles were, the general cry was to have him diſmiſſed, as what alone would ſatisfy them. This was evident from the whole tenor of their conduct, as they neglected and oppoſed the moſt proper means of calmly conſidering, and ſo underſtanding the matter in diſpute, and perſiſted in a refuſal to attend to what Mr. Edwards had to ſay in defence of his principles. And from beginning to end oppoſed the meaſures which had the beſt tendency to compromiſe and heal the difficulty; and with much zeal purſued thoſe, which were calculated to make a ſeparation certain and ſpeedy.

Mr. Edwards thought of preaching on the ſubject, that they might know what were his ſentiments, and what were the grounds of them, (of both which he was ſenſible the moſt of them were quite ignorant) before they took any ſtep for a ſeparation between him and his people. But that he might do nothing

* They who have a deſire more fully to underſtand this controverſy and know if it is juſtly repreſented here, may do it by reading what Mr. Edwards wrote on this occaſion, in order to explain and vindicate his principles; together with the Rev. Mr. Williams's anſwer, and Mr. Edwards's reply to him. And if they pleaſe, they may conſult what Dr. Mather, and Mr. Stoddard before wrote on this ſubject.

nothing to increaſe the tumult, but on the contrary take all thoſe ſteps, which he could with a good conſcience, that tended to peace, he firſt propoſed the thing to the church's ſtanding committee; ſuppoſing that if he entered on the ſubject publicly with their conſent, it would prevent the ill conſequences which otherwiſe he feared would follow. But the moſt of them would by no means conſent to it, but ſtrenuouſly oppoſed it. Upon which he gave it over for the preſent, as what in ſuch circumſtances would rather raiſe a tumult, and blow the fire up to a greater height, than anſwer the good ends propoſed.

Mr. Edwards being ſenſible that his principles were not underſtood, and much miſrepreſented through the country; and finding that his people were in too much of a heat calmly to attend to the matter in controverſy then; and were in a diſpoſition even to refuſe to hear him preach upon it, propoſed to print what he had to ſay on the point; as this ſeemed to be the only way left him to have a fair hearing. Accordingly his people conſented to put off the calling a council, till what he ſhould write was publiſhed. But they manifeſted great uneaſineſs in waiting, before it came out of the preſs. And when it was publiſhed, it was read but by very few of them. Mr. Edwards being ſenſible of this, renewed his propoſal to preach upon it, and at a meeting of the brethren of the church aſked their conſent in the following terms: "I deſire that the bre-
" thren would manifeſt their conſent, that I ſhould declare the
" reaſons of my opinion relating to full communion in the
" church, in lectures appointed for that end: Not as an act
" of authority, or as putting the power of declaring the whole
" counſel of God out of my hands; but for peace ſake, and
" to prevent occaſion of ſtrife." But it paſſed in the negative.

Mr. Edwards then propoſed that it ſhould be left to a few of the neighbouring miniſters, whether it was not, all things conſidered, reaſonable that he ſhould be heard in this matter from the pulpit, before the affair ſhould be brought to an iſſue. But this alſo paſſed in the negative.

However, he having had the advice of the miniſters and meſſengers of the neighbouring churches, who met at Northampton to adviſe them under their difficulties, proceeded to appoint a lecture, in order to preach on the ſubject, propoſing to do ſo weekly until he had finiſhed what he had to ſay. On Monday there was a precinct or ſociety meeting, in which a

vote

vote was paſſed to chooſe a committee to go to Mr. Edwards, and deſire him not to preach lectures on the ſubject in controverſy, according to his declaration and appointment. And accordingly, proceeded to chooſe a committee of three men for this purpoſe, who waited on him, and did their errand. However, Mr. Edwards thought proper to proceed according to his propoſal, and accordingly preached a number of ſermons until he had finiſhed what he had to ſay on the ſubject. Theſe lectures were very thinly attended by his own people: but great numbers of ſtrangers from the neighbouring towns attended them, ſo many as to make above half the congregation. This was in February and March 1750.

The calling a deciſive council to determine the matter of difference between paſtor and people, or rather to diſmiſs the paſtor from his church and people, (for the delay of which a great deal of impatience had been publicly manifeſted) was now more particularly attended to by Mr. Edwards and the church.

Mr. Edwards had before this inſiſted upon it from time to time, that they were by no means ripe for ſuch a procedure; (as they had not yet given him a fair hearing in defence of his cauſe: which if they would do, perhaps the need of ſuch a council would be ſuperſeded. And beſides, he thought there was abundant public evidence, that they were not yet in a temper ſuited to attend on, and be active in ſuch a tranſaction, as the diſſolving the relation between them and their paſtor; which would, as things then ſtood, probably be the event. He obſerved, "That it was exceeding unbecoming churches "of the Lamb of God to manage their religious affairs of the "greateſt importance in a ferment and tumult, which ought "to be managed with great ſolemnity, deep humiliation, and "ſubmiſſion to the awful frowns of heaven, humble depen-"dence on God, and with fervent prayer and ſupplication to "him. That therefore for them to go about ſuch an affair, "in ſuch a manner as they did, would be moſt unbecoming "the goſpel, greatly to the diſhonor of God and religion, and "a way in which a people cannot expect a bleſſing. That "ſuch a great affair as this ſhould be gone about with calm "conſideration; but that ſuch a temper as the people were "then in, was wholly inconſiſtent with this."

But having uſed all means which he could think of within his power to bring them to a more calm and charitable temper, and to hear and weigh what he had to ſay in his own defence,

with

with attention and candor; and finding that nothing prevailed; but rather the tumult and uproar was increaſed; he conſented that a deciſive council ſhould be called without any further delay.

But a difficulty attended the choice of a council, which was for ſome time inſuperable. It was agreed that the council ſhould be mutually choſen, one half by the paſtor, and the other half by the church: but the people inſiſted upon it that he ſhould be confined to the county in his choice. Mr. Edwards thought this an unreaſonable reſtraint on him, as it was known that the miniſters and churches in that county were almoſt univerſally againſt him in the controverſy that divided him and his people, and made the two parties. He indeed did not ſuppoſe that the buſineſs of the propoſed council would be to determine whether his opinion which was the occaſion of the difficulty between him and his people was right or no; or that what they were to judge of, depended upon this. But their buſineſs would be — to ſee and determine whether any poſſible way could be deviſed for an accommodation between paſtor and people, and to uſe their wiſdom and endeavour in order to this. And if they found this impracticable, they muſt determine, whether things were now ripe for a ſeparation; whether what ought in juſtice to be previous to a ſeparation had already actually been done, ſo that there was nothing further in juſtice to be demanded by either of the parties concerned, before a ſeparation ſhould take place. And if he was diſmiſſed by them, it would be their buſineſs to ſet forth to the world in what manner and for what cauſe he was diſmiſſed: how far he was innocent, and whether he might yet be employed in the work of the miniſtry, &c. All which were matters of great importance to him, and required upright and impartial judges. And conſidering the great influence a difference in religious opinions has to prejudice men one againſt another; and the cloſe connection of the point, in which moſt of the miniſters and churches in the county differed from him, with the matter to be judged of, he did not think they could be reaſonably looked upon ſo impartial judges, as that the matter ought to be wholly left to them. Beſides, he thought the caſe being ſo new and extraordinary, required the ableſt judges in the land. For theſe, and ſome other reaſons, which he offered, he inſiſted upon liberty to go out of the county for thoſe members of the propoſed council, in which he was to have a choice. In this,

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as was juſt now ſaid, the people ſtrenuouſly and obſtinately oppoſed him. They at length agreed to leave the matter to a council conſiſting of the miniſters and meſſengers of the five neighbouring churches: who, after they had met twice upon it, and had the caſe largely debated before them, were equally divided, and therefore left the matter undetermined.

However, they were all agreed, that Mr. Edwards ought to have liberty to go out of the county for ſome of the council. And at the next church meeting, which was on the 26th of March, Mr. Edwards offered to join with them in calling a council, if they would conſent that he ſhould chuſe two of the churches out of the county, in caſe the council conſiſted of but ten churches. The church however refuſed to comply with this at one meeting after another repeatedly; and proceeded to warn a church meeting and chooſe a moderator, in order to act without their paſtor.

But to paſs by many particulars, at length at a meeting of the church, warned by their paſtor, May 3d. they voted their conſent to his propoſal of going out of the county for two of the churches, that ſhould be applied to. And then they proceeded to make choice of the ten miniſters and churches, of which the council ſhould conſiſt. Accordingly, the churches were ſent to, and the council convened on the 19th of June. Who, after they had made ſome fruitleſs attempts for a compoſition between the paſtor and church, paſſed a reſolve, by the majority of one voice * only, to the following purpoſe: "That "it is expedient that the paſtoral relation between Mr. Ed- "wards and his church be immediately diſſolved if the peo- "ple ſtill perſiſt in deſiring it." And it being publicly put to the people, whether they ſtill inſiſted on Mr. Edwards's diſmiſſion from the paſtoral office over them? A great majority (above two hundred againſt twenty) zealouſly voted for his diſmiſſion. And he was accordingly diſmiſſed June 22, 1750.

The diſſenting part of the council, entered their proteſt againſt this proceeding, judging that it was too much in a hurry, as they were by no means ripe for a ſeparation, conſidering the paſt

* One of the churches which Mr. Edwards choſe did not ſee fit to join the council. However, the miniſter of that church being at Northampton at the ſitting of the council, was deſired by Mr. Edwards and the church to ſit in council and act, which he did. But there being no meſſenger from the church, the council was not full, and there was a diſparity; by which means doubtleſs, there was one vote more for an immediate diſmiſſion, than againſt it.

paſt conduct, and preſent temper of the people. And ſome of that part of the council that were active, expreſſed themſelves ſurprized at the uncommon zeal and engagedneſs of ſpirit, publicly manifeſted by the people in their voting for a diſmiſſion; which evidenced to them, and all obſerving ſpectators, that they were far from a temper of mind becoming ſuch a ſolemn and awful tranſaction, conſidered in all its circumſtances.

Being thus diſmiſſed, he preached his farewel ſermon on the firſt of July, from 2 Cor. i. 14. The doctrine he obſerved from the words was this, "Miniſters and the people that have been "under their care, muſt meet one another before Chriſt's tri-"bunal, at the day of judgment." It was a remarkably ſolemn and affecting diſcourſe, and was publiſhed at the deſire of ſome of the hearers.

After Mr. Edwards was diſmiſſed from Northampton, he preached there ſome times occaſionally when they had no other preacher to ſupply the pulpit: till at length a great uneaſineſs was manifeſted by many of the people, at his preaching there at all. Upon which, the committee for ſupplying the pulpit, called the town together, to know their minds with reſpect to that matter: when they voted that it was not agreeable to their minds, that he ſhould preach among them. Accordingly, when Mr. Edwards was in town, and they had no other miniſter to preach to them, they carried on public worſhip among themſelves, and without any preaching, rather than to invite Mr. Edwards!

Every one muſt be ſenſible that this was a great trial to Mr. Edwards. He had been near twenty-four years among that people; and his labours had been, to all appearance, from time to time greatly bleſſed among them: and a great number looked on him as their ſpiritual father, who had been the happy inſtrument of turning them from darkneſs to light, and plucking them as brands out of the burning. And they had from time to time profeſſed that they looked upon it as one of their greateſt priviileges to have ſuch a miniſter, and manifeſted their great love and eſteem of him, to ſuch a degree, that, (as S. Paul ſays of the Galatians) if it had been poſſible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and given them to him. And they had a great intereſt in his heart: He had borne them on his heart and carried them in his boſom for many years; exerciſing a tender concern and love for them: for their good he was always writing, contriving, labouring; for them he had

poured out ten thouſand fervent prayers; in their good he had rejoiced as one that findeth great ſpoil; and they were dear to him above any other people under heaven.

Now to have this people turn againſt him, and thruſt him out from among them, in a great tumult and heat, with haſte, and a great degree of violence; like the Jews of old ſtopping their ears and runing upon him with furious zeal, not allowing him to defend himſelf by giving him a fair hearing; and even refuſing ſo much as to hear him preach; many of them ſurmiſing and publicly ſpeaking many ill things as to his ends and deſigns! To have the tables turned ſo ſuddenly and the voice ſo general and loud againſt him. This ſurely muſt come very near to him, and try his ſpirit. The words of the pſalmiſt ſeems applicable to this caſe, "It was not an enemy that "reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it "he that hated me, that did magnify himſelf againſt me, then "I would have hid myſelf from him. But it was THOU— "my guide and mine acquaintance. We took ſweet counſel "together, and walked unto the houſe of God in company."

Let us therefore now *behold the man!*

The calm and ſedateneſs of his mind; his meekneſs and humility in great and violent oppoſition, and injurious treatment; his reſolution and ſteady conduct through all this dark and terrible ſtorm, were truly wonderful, and cannot be ſet in ſo beautiful and affecting a light by any deſcription, as they appeared in to his friends, who were eye-witneſſes.

Mr. Edwards had a numerous and chargeable family, and little or no income, excluſive of his ſalary: and conſidering how far he was advanced in years; the general diſpoſition of people who want a miniſter to prefer a young man who has never been ſettled, to one who has been diſmiſſed from his people; and what miſrepreſentations were made of his principles through the country, it looked to him not at all probable that he ſhould ever have opportunity to be ſettled again in the work of the miniſtry, if he was diſmiſſed from Northampton: And he was not inclined or able to take any other courſe, or go into any other buſineſs to get a living. So that beggery as well as diſgrace ſtared him full in the face, if he perſiſted in his principles. To be ſure, he viewed himſelf as taking the moſt direct way to theſe, according to the natural courſe of things, by diſcovering and adhering to his principles, in the ſituation he then was. For he foreſaw all this, before it came upon him; and therefore had the opportunity and the temptation to eſcape it, by concealing his principles. When he was fixed in his princi-

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ples, and before they were publicly known, he told ſome of his friends, that if he diſcovered and perſiſted in them, it would moſt likely iſſue in his diſmiſſion and diſgrace; and the ruin of himſelf and family, as to their temporal intereſts. He therefore firſt ſat down and counted the coſt, and deliberately took up the croſs, when it was ſet before him in its full weight and magnitude; and in direct oppoſition to all worldly views and motives. And therefore his conduct in theſe circumſtances, was a remarkable exerciſe and diſcovery of his conſcientiouſneſs; and his readineſs to deny himſelf, and forſake all that he had, to follow Chriſt.

A man muſt have a conſiderable degree of the ſpirit of a martyr, not to flinch in ſuch a caſe as this; but go on with the ſtedfaſtneſs and reſolution with which he did. He, as it were, put his life in his hand, and ventured on where truth and duty appeared to lead him, unmoved at the threatning dangers on every ſide.

However, God did not forſake him. As he gave him thoſe inward ſupports by which he was able in patience to poſſeſs his ſoul, and calmly and courageouſly row on in the ſtorm, as it were, in the face of boiſtrous winds, beating hard upon him, and in the midſt of gaping waves threatning to ſwallow him up: ſo he ſoon appeared for him, in his providence, even beyond all his expectations. His correſpondents and other friends in Scotland, hearing of his diſmiſſion, and fearing it might be the means of bringing him into worldly ſtraits, generouſly contributed a handſome ſum, and ſent it over to him.

And God did not leave him without tender, valuable friends at Northampton. For a ſmall number of his people who oppoſed his diſmiſſion from the beginning, and ſome who acted on neither ſide, who joined with him after his diſmiſſion, and adhered to him, under the influence of their great eſteem and love of Mr. Edwards, were willing and thought themſelves able to maintain him: and inſiſted upon it that it was his duty to ſtay among them, as a diſtinct and ſeparate congregation from the body of the town, who had rejected him.

Mr. Edwards could not ſee it to be his duty to ſtay among them, as circumſtances were; as this would probably be a means of perpetuating an unhappy diviſion in the town; and there was to him no proſpect of doing the good there, which would counterbalance the evil. However, that he might do all he could to ſatisfy his tender and afflicted friends; and becauſe in the multitude of counſellors there is ſafety, he conſented

ſented to aſk the advice of an eccleſiaſtical council. Accordingly, a council was called, and convened at Northampton on the 15th of May 1751.

The town on this occaſion was put into a great tumult and fire. They who were active in Mr. Edwards's diſmiſſion ſuppoſed, though without any ground, and contrary to truth, that he was contriving and attempting with his friends, again to introduce himſelf at Northampton. They drew up a remonſtrance againſt their proceedings, and laid it before the council (though they would not acknowlege them to be an eccleſiaſtical council) containing many heavy, though groundleſs, inſinuations and charges againſt Mr. Edwards, and bitter accuſations of the party who had adhered to him: But refuſed to appear and ſupport any of their charges, or ſo much as to give the gentlemen of the council any opportunity to confer with them, about the affair depending; though it was diligently ſought.

The council having heard what Mr. Edwards, and they who adhered to him, and any others who deſired to be heard, had to ſay, adviſed, agreeable to Mr. Edwards's judgment and expectation, that he ſhould leave Northampton, and accept of the miſſion to which he was invited at Stockbridge; of which a more particular account will be given preſently.

Many other facts relative to this ſorrowful, ſtrange, ſurprizing affair (the moſt ſo doubtleſs of any of the kind, that ever happened in New-England; and perhaps, in any part of the chriſtian world) might be related; but as this more general hiſtory of it, may be ſufficient to anſwer the ends propoſed, viz. to rectify ſome groſs miſrepreſentations that have been made of the matter, and diſcover the great trial Mr. Edwards had herein, it is thought beſt to ſuppreſs other particulars. As a proper cloſe to this melancholy ſtory; and to confirm, and further illuſtrate what has been related, the following letter from Joſeph Hawley, Eſq. (a gentleman who was well acquainted with, and very active in the tranſactions of this whole affair, and very much a head and leader in it) to the Rev. Mr. Hall of Sutton, publiſhed in a weekly news-paper in Boſton, May 19, 1760, is here inſerted.

To

To the Rev. Mr. HALL *of* SUTTON.

Northampton, May 9, 1760.

Rev. Sir,

I HAVE often wiſhed that every member of the two eccleſiaſtical councils (that formerly ſat in Northampton upon the unhappy differences between our former moſt worthy and reverend paſtor Mr. Jonathan Edwards and the church here) whereof you was a member; I ſay ſir, I have often wiſhed every of them truly knew my real ſenſe of my own conduct in the affairs that the one and the other of ſaid councils are privy to; and as I have long apprehended it to be my duty not only to humble myſelf before God for what was unchriſtian and ſinful, in my conduct before ſaid councils, but alſo to confeſs my faults to them, and take ſhame to myſelf therefor before them. I have often ſtudied with myſelf in what manner it was practicable for me to do it; and when I underſtood that you ſir, and Mr. Eaton were to be at Cold Spring at the time of their late council, I reſolved to improve the opportunity fully to open my mind there to you and him thereon; and thought that probably ſome method might be then thought of in which my reflections on myſelf touching the matters above hinted at, might be communicated to moſt if not all the gentlemen aforeſaid, who did not reſide in this county: But you know, ſir, how difficult it was for us to converſe together by ourſelves when at Cold Spring, without giving umbrage to that people; I therefore propoſed writing to you upon the matters which I had then opportunity only moſt ſummarily to ſuggeſt; which you ſir, ſignified would be agreeable to you: I therefore now undertake what I then propoſed, in which I humbly aſk the divine aid; and that I may be made moſt freely willing fully to confeſs my ſin and guilt to you and the world in thoſe inſtances which I have reaſon to ſuppoſe fell under your notice, as they were public and notorious tranſactions, and on account whereof, therefore, you ſir, and all others who had knowlege thereof, had juſt cauſe to be offended at me.

And in the firſt place, Sir, I apprehend that with the church and people of Northampton, I ſinned and erred exceedingly

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in conſenting and labouring that there ſhould be ſo early a diſmiſſion of Mr. Edwards from his paſtoral relation to us, even upon the ſuppoſition that he was really in a miſtake in the diſputed point: not only becauſe the diſpute was upon matters ſo very diſputable in themſelves and at the greateſt remove from fundamental, but becauſe Mr. Edwards ſo long had approved himſelf a moſt faithful and painful paſtor to ſaid church; and alſo changed his ſentiments in that point wholly from a tender regard to what appeared to him to be truth; and had made known his ſentiments with great moderation and upon great deliberation againſt all worldly motives, and from mere fidelity to his great maſter, and a tender regard to the ſouls of his flock, as we had the higheſt reaſon to judge: which conſiderations now ſeem to me ſufficient; and would (if we had been of a right ſpirit) have greatly endeared him to his people, and made us to the laſt degree, reluctant to parting with, and diſpoſed us to the exerciſe of the greateſt candour, gentleneſs and moderation: how much of the reverſe whereof appeared in us, I need not tell you, Sir, who was an eye-witneſs of our temper and conduct.

And although it does not become me to pronounce deciſively on a point ſo diſputable as what was then in diſpute; yet I beg leave to ſay, that I really apprehend that it is of the higheſt moment to the body of this church, and to me in particular moſt ſolicitouſly to enquire, whether like the Phariſees and lawyers in John Baptiſt's time, we did not reject the counſel of God againſt ourſelves, in rejecting Mr. Edwards and his doctrine: which was the ground of his diſmiſſion. And I humbly conceive that it highly imports us all of this church, moſt ſeriouſly and impartially to examine what that moſt worthy and able divine about that time publiſhed in ſupport of the ſame, whereby he being dead yet ſpeaketh.

But there were three things, Sir, eſpecially in my own particular conduct before the firſt council, which have been juſtly matter of great grief and much trouble to me almoſt ever ſince, *to wit*.

In the firſt place I confeſs, Sir, that I acted very immodeſtly and abuſively to you, as well as injuriouſly to the church and myſelf, when with much zeal and unbecoming aſſurance, I moved the council that they would interpoſe to ſilence and ſtop you in an addreſs you was making one morning to the people, wherein you was, if I do not miſremember, briefly

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exhorting them to a tender remembrance of the former affection and harmony that had long ſubſiſted between them and their reverend paſtor, and the great comfort and profit which they had apprehended that they had received from his miniſtry ; for which, Sir, I heartily aſk your forgiveneſs ; and I think, that we ought inſtead of oppoſing an exhortation of that nature, to have received it with all thankfulneſs.

Another particular of my conduct before that council, which I now apprehend was criminal, and was owing to the want of that tender affection and reverend reſpect and eſteem for Mr. Edwards which he had highly merited of me, was my ſtrenuouſly oppoſing the adjournment of the matters ſubmitted to that council, for about two months ; for which I declare myſelf unfeignedly ſorry ; and I with ſhame remember, that I did it in a peremptory, deciſive, vehement and very immodeſt manner.

But, Sir, the moſt criminal part of my conduct at that time, that I am conſcious of, was my exhibiting to that council a ſet of arguments in writing, the drift whereof was to prove the reaſonableneſs and neceſſity of Mr. Edwards's diſmiſſion in caſe no accommodation was then effected with mutual conſent ; which tract by clear implication contained ſome ſevere, uncharitable, and if I do not miſremember, groundleſs and ſlanderous imputations on Mr. Edwards, and expreſſed in bitter language ; and although the original draft thereof was not done by me, yet I fooliſhly and ſinfully conſented to copy it ; and as agent for the church, to read it and deliver it to the council, which I could never have done, if I had not had a wicked reliſh for perverſe things : which conduct of mine, I confeſs was very ſinful : am perſuaded was highly provoking to God, and for which I am aſhamed, confounded, and have nothing to anſwer.

As to the church's remonſtrance (as it was called) which their committee preferred to the laſt of ſaid councils, to all which I was conſenting, and in the compoſing whereof I was very active, as alſo in bringing the church to their vote upon it : I would in the firſt place only obſerve, that I do not remember any thing in that ſmall part of it which was plainly diſcurſive of the expediency of Mr. Edwards's re-ſettlement here as paſtor to a part of the church, which was very exceptionable ; but as to all the reſidue, which was much the greateſt part thereof (and I am not certain that any part was wholly

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free) it was every where larded with unchriſtian bitterneſs, ſarcaſtical and unmannerly inſinuations, contained divers direct grievous and criminal charges and allegations againſt Mr. Edwards; which I have ſince good reaſon to ſuppoſe were all founded on jealous and uncharitable miſtakes, and ſo were really groſs ſlanders, alſo many heavy and reproachful charges upon divers of Mr. Edwards's adherents, and ſome ſevere cenſures of them all indiſcriminately; all of which (if not wholly falſe and groundleſs) yet were altogether unneceſſary, and therefore highly criminal. Indeed I am fully convinced, that the whole of that compoſure, excepting the ſmall part thereof abovementioned, was totally unchriſtian, a ſcandalous, abuſive, injurious libel, againſt Mr. Edwards and his particular friends; eſpecially the former, and highly provoking and deteſtable in the ſight of God; for which I am heartily ſorry and aſhamed; and pray I may remember it with deep abaſement and penitence all my days. Nor do I now think that the church's conduct in refuſing to appear and attend before that council to ſupport the charges and allegations in ſaid remonſtrance againſt Mr. Edwards and ſaid brethren, which they demanded, was ever vindicated by all the ſubtle anſwers that were given to ſaid demand; nor do I think that our conduct in that inſtance was capable of a defence, for it appears to me, that by making charges of ſcandalous matters againſt them before ſaid council, we neceſſarily ſo far gave that council juriſdiction; and I own with ſorrow and regret, that I zealouſly endeavoured, that the church ſhould perſeveringly refuſe to appear before ſaid council for the purpoſe aboveſaid; which I humbly pray God to forgive.

Another part of my conduct, Sir, of which I have long repented, and for which I hereby declare my hearty ſorrow, was my obſtinate oppoſition to the laſt council's having any conference with the church; which ſaid council earneſtly and repeatedly moved for, and which the church finally denied (as you know.) I think it diſcovered a great deal of pride and vain ſufficiency in the church, and ſhewed them to be very opiniative, eſpecially the chief ſticklers, one of whom I own I was, and think it was running a moſt preſumptuous riſk, and acting the part of proud ſcorners, for us to refuſe hearing and candidly and ſeriouſly conſidering what that council could ſay or propoſe to us; among whom there were divers juſtly in great reputation for grace and wiſdom.

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In theſe inſtances, Sir, of my conduct, and others (to which you was not privy) in the courſe of that moſt melancholy contention with Mr. Edwards, wherein I now ſee that I was very much influenced by vaſt pride, ſelf-ſufficiency, ambition and vanity. I appear to myſelf vile, and doubtleſs much more ſo to others who are more impartial; and do in the review thereof, abhor myſelf, and repent ſorely: and if my own heart condemns me it behoves me ſolemnly to remember, that God is greater, and knoweth all things: and I hereby own, Sir, that ſuch treatment of Mr. Edwards, as is herein before mentioned, wherein I was ſo deeply concerned and active, was particularly and very aggravatedly ſinful and ungrateful in me, becauſe I was not only under the common obligations of each individual of the ſociety to him, as to a moſt able, diligent and faithful paſtor; but I had alſo received many inſtances of his tenderneſs, goodneſs, and generoſity to me, as a young kinſman, whom he was diſpoſed to treat in a moſt friendly manner.

Indeed, Sir, I muſt own, that by my conduct in conſulting and acting againſt Mr. Edwards within the time of our moſt unhappy diſputes with him, and eſpecially in and about that abominable remonſtrance I have ſo far ſymbolized with Balaam, Ahitophel and Judas, that I am confounded and filled with terror oftentimes when I attend to the moſt painful ſimilitude.

And I freely confeſs, that on account of my conduct abovementioned, I have the greateſt reaſon to tremble at thoſe moſt ſolemn and awful words of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 6. and thoſe in Luke x. at the 16th: and I am moſt ſorely ſenſible that nothing but that infinite grace and mercy which ſaved ſome of the betrayers and murderers of our bleſſed Lord, and the perſecutors of the martyrs, can pardon me; in which alone I hope for pardon, for the ſake of Chriſt, whoſe blood (bleſſed be God) cleanſeth from all ſin. On the whole, Sir, I am convinced, that I have the greateſt reaſon to ſay as David, "Have "mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindneſs, "according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out "my tranſgreſſions, waſh me thoroughly from mine iniquity, "and cleanſe me from my ſin; for I acknowlege my tranſgreſ-"ſions, and my ſin is ever before me: hide thy face from my "ſins, and blot out all mine iniquities: create in me a clean "heart, O God, and renew a right ſpirit within me; caſt me

" not away from thy preſence, and take not thy holy ſpirit " from me. Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation, and " uphold me with thy free ſpirit."

And I humbly apprehend that it greatly concerns the church of Northampton moſt ſeriouſly to examine whether the many hard ſpeeches, ſpoken by many particular members againſt their former paſtor, ſome of which the church really countenanced, and eſpecially thoſe ſpoken by the church as a body, in that moſt vile remonſtrance are not ſo odious and ungodly, as to be utterly uncapable of defence; and whether ſaid church were not guilty of great ſin in being ſo willing and diſpoſed for ſo ſlight a cauſe, to part with ſo faithful and godly a miniſter as Mr. Edwards was. And whether ever God will hold us guiltleſs until we cry to him for Chriſt's ſake to pardon and ſave us from that judgment which ſuch ungodly deeds deſerve, and publicly humble and take ſhame to ourſelves therefor. And I moſt heartily wiſh and pray that the town and church of Northampton would ſeriouſly and carefully examine whether they have not abundant cauſe to judge that they are now lying under great guilt in the ſight of God: and whether thoſe of us who were concerned in that moſt awful contention with Mr. Edwards, can ever more reaſonably expect God's favor and bleſſing, until our eyes are opened, and we become thoroughly convinced that we have greatly provoked the moſt High, and been injurious to one of the beſt of men; and until we ſhall be thoroughly convinced that we have dreadfully perſecuted Chriſt by perſecuting and vexing that juſt man and ſervant of Chriſt; until we ſhall be humble as in the duſt therefor, and until we openly in full terms, and without baulking the matter, confeſs the ſame before the world, and moſt humbly and earneſtly ſeek forgiveneſs of God, and do what we can to honor the memory of Mr. Edwards, and clear it of all the aſperſions which we unjuſtly caſt upon him; ſince God has been pleaſed to put it beyond our power to aſk his forgiveneſs. Such terms I am perſuaded the great and righteous God will hold us to, and that it will be in vain for us to hope to eſcape with impunity in any other way. This I am convinced of with regard to myſelf, and this way I moſt ſolemnly propoſe to take myſelf (if God in his mercy ſhall give me opportunity) that ſo by making free confeſſion to God and man of my ſin and guilt, and publicly taking ſhame to myſelf therefor, I may give glory

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to the God of Iſrael, and do what in me lies, to clear the memory of that venerable man from the wrongs and injuries I was ſo active in bringing on his reputation and character; and I thank God that he has been pleaſed to ſpare my life and opportunity therefor to this time, and am ſorry that I have delayed the affair ſo long.

Although I made the ſubſtance of almoſt all the foregoing reflections in writing, but not exactly in the ſame manner to Mr. Edwards and the brethren who adhered to him, in Mr. Edwards's life, and before he removed from Stockbridge, and I have reaſon to believe that he, from his great candor and charity, heartily forgave me and prayed for me: yet becauſe that was not generally known, I look on myſelf obliged to take further ſteps; for while I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old, &c.

For all theſe my great ſins therefor, in the firſt place, I humbly and moſt earneſtly aſk forgiveneſs of God; nextly, of the relatives and near friends of Mr. Edwards. I alſo aſk the forgiveneſs of all thoſe who were called Mr. Edwards's adherents; and of all the members of the eccleſiaſtical councils above mentioned; and laſtly, of all chriſtian people, who have had any knowlege of the matters aboveſaid, or any of them.

I have no deſire, Sir, that you ſhould make any ſecret of this letter; but deſire you would communicate the ſame to whom you ſhall judge proper, and I purpoſe (if God ſhall give me opportunity) to procure it to be publiſhed in ſome one of the public news papers; for I can not deviſe any other way of making known my ſentiments of the foregoing matters to all who ought to be acquainted therewith, and therefore I think I ought to do it, whatever remarks I may foreſee will be made thereon.

Probably when it comes out, ſome of my acquaintance will pronounce me quite over run with vapours; others will be furniſhed with matter for mirth and pleaſantry; others will curſorily paſs it over as relating to matters quite ſtale; but ſome I am perſuaded will rejoice to ſee me brought to a ſenſe of my ſin and duty; and I myſelf ſhall be conſcious that I have done ſomething of what the nature of the caſe admits, towards undoing what is, and long has been, to my greateſt remorſe and trouble that it was ever done.

Sir, I deſire that none would entertain a thought from my having ſpoken reſpectfully of Mr. Edwards, that I am diſaffect-

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ed to our preſent paſtor; for the very reverſe is true; and I have a reverend eſteem, real value, and hearty affection for him, and bleſs God, that he has notwithſtanding all our unworthineſs, given us one to ſucceed Mr. Edwards, who (as I have reaſon to hope) is truly faithful.

I conclude this long letter, by heartily deſiring your prayers, that my repentance of my ſins above mentioned may be unfeigned and genuine, and ſuch as God in infinite mercy for Chriſt's ſake will accept: And I beg leave to ſubſcribe myſelf,

Sir, your real, though very unworthy friend,

and obedient ſervant,

JOSEPH HAWLEY.

SECTION III.

His MISSION *to the* INDIANS *at* STOCKBRIDGE, *&c.*

THE Indian Miſſion at Stockbridge (a town in the weſtern part of the province of the Maſſachuſetts-Bay, ſixty miles from Northampton) being vacant by the death of the late Reverend Mr. Sergeant, the honored and reverend commiſſioners for Indian affairs, in Boſton, who have the care and direction of it, applied to him, as the moſt ſuitable perſon they could think of to betruſt with that miſſion. And he was at the ſame time invited by the inhabitants of Stockbridge; and being adviſed by the council, above mentioned, to accept of the invitation, he repaired to Stockbridge; and was introduced and fixed as miſſionary to the Indians there by an eccleſiaſtical council called for that purpoſe, Auguſt 8, 1751.

When Mr. Edwards firſt engaged in the miſſion, there was a hopeful proſpect of its being extenſively ſerviceable, under his care and influence; not only to that tribe of Indians which was ſettled at Stockbridge, but among the Six Nations: ſome of whom were coming to Stockbridge to ſettle, and bring their own, and as many of their neighbours children as they could get; to be educated and inſtructed there. For this end, a houſe for a board-

a boarding ſchool, which was projected by Mr. Sergeant, was erected on a tract of land appropriated to that uſe by the Indians at Stockbridge: where the Indian children, male and female were to be educated, by being cloathed and fed, and inſtructed by proper perſons in uſeful learning. And the boys to be learned huſbandry or mechanic trades, and the girls all ſorts of women's work. For the encouragement of which, ſome generous ſubſcriptions were made both in England and America. And the great and general court of the province of the Maſſachuſetts-Bay, did much to promote the affair, and provided lands for the Mohocks to ſettle on, who ſhould incline to come. And the generous Mr. Hollis, to encourage the thing, ordered twenty-four Indian children to be educated on the ſame footing, wholly at his coſt. Alſo the ſociety in London, for propagating the goſpel among the Indians in and about New-England, directed their commiſſioners in Boſton to do conſiderable towards this deſign.

But partly by reaſon of ſome unhappy differences that took place among thoſe who had the chief management of this affair at Stockbridge, of which a particular account would not be proper in this place; and partly by the war breaking out between England and France, which is generally very fatal to ſuch affairs among Indians, this hopeful proſpect came to nothing.

Mr. Edwards's labours were attended with no remarkable viſible ſucceſs while at Stockbridge: though he performed the buſineſs of his miſſion to the good acceptance of the inhabitants in general, both Engliſh and Indians, and of the commiſſioners, who ſupported him honorably, and confided very much in his judgment and wiſdom in all matters relating to the miſſion.

Stockbridge proved to Mr. Edwards a more quiet, and, on many accounts, a much more comfortable ſituation than he was in before. It being ſo much in one corner of the country, his time was not ſo much taken up with company, as it was at Northampton, though many of his friends, from almoſt all parts of the land, often made him pleaſant and profitable viſits. And he had not ſo much concern and trouble with other churches as he was obliged to have when at Northampton; by being frequently ſought to for advice, and called to aſſiſt in eccleſiaſtical councils. Here therefore he followed his beloved ſtudy more cloſely, and to better purpoſe than ever. In theſe ſix years he doubtleſs made ſwifter advances in knowlege than ever before, and added more to his manuſcripts than in any ſix years of his life.

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And this was probably as uſeful a part of his life as any. For in this time he wrote the two laſt books that have been publiſhed by him (of which a more particular account will be given hereafter) by which he has doubtleſs greatly ſerved the church of Chriſt, and will be a bleſſing to many thouſands yet unborn.

Thus, after his uprightneſs and faithfulneſs had been ſufficiently tried at Northampton, his kind maſter provided for him a quiet retreat, which was rendered the more ſweet by the preceding ſtorm; and where he had a better opportunity to purſue and finiſh the work God had for him to do.

SECTION IV.

His being made PRESIDENT *of* NEW-JERSEY COLLEGE; *his* SICKNESS *and* DEATH.

ON the 24th of September, 1757, the Rev. Mr. Aaron Burr, Preſident of New-Jerſey College, died.—And at the next meeting of the Truſtees, Mr. Edwards was choſen his ſucceſſor. The news of which was quite unexpected, and not a little ſurprizing to him. He looked on himſelf in many reſpects ſo unqualified for that buſineſs, that he wondered that gentlemen of ſo good judgment, and ſo well acquainted with him, as he knew ſome of the Truſtees were, ſhould think of *him* for that place. He had many objections in his own mind againſt undertaking the buſineſs, both from his unfitneſs, and his particular circumſtances; yet could not certainly determine that it was not his duty to accept. The following extract of a letter which he wrote to the Truſtees, will give the reader a view of his ſentiments and exerciſes on this occaſion, as well as of the great deſigns he was deeply engaged in, and zealouſly proſecuting.

Stockbridge,

Stockbridge, 19th October 1757.

Reverend and Honored Gentlemen,

I Was not a little ſurprized, on receiving the unexpected notice of your having made choice of me to ſucceed the late Preſident Burr, as the head of Naſſau Hall.——I am much in doubt whether I am called to undertake the buſineſs, which you have done me the unmerited honor to chooſe me for—If ſome regard may be had to my outward comfort, I might mention the many inconveniencies and great detriment, which muſt be ſuſtained, by my removing with my numerous family, ſo far from all the eſtate I have in the world (without any proſpect of diſpoſing of it, under preſent circumſtances, without loſing it, in great part) now when we have ſcarcely got over the trouble and damage ſuſtained by our removal from Northampton, and have but juſt began to have our affairs in a comfortable ſituation for a ſubſiſtence in this place; and the expence I muſt immediately be at to put myſelf into circumſtance tolerably comporting with the needful ſupport of the honor of the office I am invited to; which will not well conſiſt with my ability.—But this is not my main objection: The chief difficulty in my mind, in the way of accepting this important and arduous office, are theſe two: Firſt my own defects, unfitting me for ſuch an undertaking, many of which are generally known; beſides other, which my own heart is conſcious to.—I have a conſtitution in many reſpects peculiarly unhappy, attended with flaccid ſolids, vapid, fizy and ſcarce fluids, and a low tide of ſpirits; often occaſioning a kind of childiſh weakneſs and contemptibleneſs of ſpeech, preſence and demeanor; with a diſagreable dulneſs and ſtiffneſs, much unfiting me for converſation, but more eſpecially for the government of a college.—This poorneſs of conſtitution makes me ſhrink at the thoughts of taking upon me, in the decline of life, ſuch a new and great buſineſs, attended with ſuch a multiplicity of cares, and requiring ſuch a degree of activity, alertneſs and ſpirit of government; eſpecially as ſucceeding one, ſo remarkably well qualified in theſe reſpects, giving occaſion to every one to remark the wide difference. I am alſo deficient in ſome parts of learning, particularly in Algebra, and the higher parts of Mathematics, and in the Greek Claſſics; my Greek learning having been chiefly in the new teſtament.

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The other thing is this; that my engaging in this buſineſs, will not well conſiſt, with thoſe views, and that courſe of employ in my ſtudy, which have long engaged, and ſwallowed up my mind, and been the chief entertainment and delight of my life.—

And here, honored ſirs, (emboldened by the teſtimony I have now received of your unmerited eſteem, to rely on your candor) I will with freedom open myſelf to you.

My method of ſtudy, from my firſt beginning the work of the miniſtry, has been very much by writing; applying myſelf in this way, to improve every important hint; purſuing the clew to my utmoſt, when any thing in reading, meditation or converſation, has been ſuggeſted to my mind, that ſeemed to promiſe light in any weighty point—Thus penning what appeared to me my beſt thoughts, on innumerable ſubjects for my own benefit.——The longer I proſecuted my ſtudies in this method, the more habitual it became, and the more pleaſant and profitable I found it.—The further I travelled in this way, the more and wider the field opened, which has occaſioned my laying out many things, in my mind, to do in this manner, if God ſhould ſpare my life, which my heart hath been much upon: particularly many things againſt moſt of the prevailing errors of the preſent day, which I cannot with any patience ſee maintained (to the utter ſubverting of the goſpel of Chriſt) with ſo high a hand, and ſo long continued a triumph, with ſo little controul, when it appears ſo evident to me, that there is truly no foundation for any of this glorying and inſult.—I have already publiſhed ſomething on one of the main points in diſpute between the Arminians and Calviniſts: and have it in view, God willing (as I have already ſignified to the public) in like manner to conſider all the other controverted points, and have done much towards a preparation for it——But beſides theſe, I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication) a great work, which I call a *Hiſtory of the Work of Redemption*, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of an hiſtory, conſidering the affair of chriſtian Theology, as the whole of it, in each part, ſtands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jeſus Chriſt; which I ſuppoſe is to be the grand deſign of all God's deſigns, and the ſummum and ultimum of all the divine operations and decrees; particularly conſidering all parts of the grand ſcheme in their

hiſtorical

hiſtorical order.—The order of their exiſtence, or their being brought forth to view, in the courſe of divine diſpenſations, or the wonderful ſeries of ſucceſſive acts and events; beginning from eternity and deſcending from thence to the great work and ſucceſſive diſpenſations of the infinitely wiſe God in time, conſidering the chief events coming to paſs in the church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the ſtate of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have account of in hiſtory or prophecy; until at laſt we come to the general reſurrection, laſt judgment, and conſummation of all things; when it ſhall be ſaid, *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.* Concluding my work, with the conſideration of that perfect ſtate of things, which ſhall be finally ſettled, to laſt for eternity.——This hiſtory will be carried on with regard to all three worlds, Heaven, Earth and Hell: conſidering the connected, ſucceſſive events and alterations, in each ſo far as the ſcriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is moſt ſcriptural and moſt natural: which is a method which appears to me the moſt beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine, will appear to greateſt advantage in the brighteſt light, in the moſt ſtriking manner, ſhewing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole.

I have alſo for my own profit and entertainment, done much towards another great work, which I call *the Harmony of the Old and New Teſtament* in three parts—The firſt conſidering the prophecies of the Meſſiah, his redemption and kingdom; the evidences of their references to the Meſſiah, &c. comparing them all one with another, demonſtrating their agreement and true ſcope and ſenſe: alſo conſidering all the various particulars wherein theſe prophecies have their exact fulfilment; ſhewing the univerſal, preciſe, and admirable correſpondence between predictions and events. The ſecond part: Conſidering the types of the Old Teſtament, ſhewing the evidence of their being intended as repreſentations of the great things of the goſpel of Chriſt: and the agreement of the type with the antitype.—The third and great part conſidering the harmony of the Old and New Teſtament, as to doctrine and precept.—In the courſe of this work, I find there will be occaſion for an explanation of a very great part of the holy ſcripture; which may, in ſuch a view be explained in a method, which to me ſeems the moſt

entertaining and profitable, beſt tending to lead the mind to a view of the true ſpirit, deſign, life and ſoul of the ſcriptures, as well as to their proper uſe and improvement.

I have alſo many other things in hand, in ſome of which I have made great progreſs, which I will not trouble you with an account of.—Some of theſe things, if divine providence favour, I ſhould be willing to attempt a publication of——So far as I myſelf am able to judge of what talents I have, for benefiting my fellow creatures by word, I think I can write better than I can ſpeak.

My heart is ſo much in theſe ſtudies, that I cannot find it in my heart to be willing to put myſelf into an incapacity to purſue them any more, in the future part of my life, to ſuch a degree as I muſt, if I undertake to go through the ſame courſe of employ, in the office of a preſident, that Mr. Burr did, inſtructing in all the languages, and taking the whole care of the inſtruction of one of the claſſes in all parts of learning, beſides his other labors.——If I ſhould ſee light to determine me to accept the place offered me, I ſhould be willing to take upon me the work of a Preſident, ſo far as it conſiſts in the general inſpection of the whole ſociety and ſubſervient to the ſchool, as to their order and methods of ſtudy and inſtruction, aſſiſting myſelf in immediate inſtruction in the arts and ſciences (as diſcretion ſhould direct and occaſion ſerve, and the ſtate of things require) eſpecially the ſenior claſs: and added to all ſhould be willing to do the whole work of a profeſſor of divinity, in public and private lectures, propoſing queſtions to be anſwered, and ſome to be diſcuſſed in writing and free converſation, in meetings of graduates and others, appointed in proper ſeaſons for theſe ends.—It would be now out of my way, to ſpend time, in a conſtant teaching of the languages; unleſs it be the Hebrew tongue, which I ſhould be willing to improve myſelf in, by inſtructing others.

On the whole, I am much at a loſs, with reſpect to the way of my duty in this important affair: I am in doubt, whether if I ſhould engage in it, I ſhould not do what both you and I ſhould be ſorry for afterwards. Nevertheleſs, I think the greatneſs of the affair, and the regard due to ſo worthy and venerable a body, as that of the Truſtees of Naſſau-Hall, requires my taking the matter into ſerious conſideration: And unleſs you ſhould appear to be diſcouraged, by the things which I have now repreſented, as to any further expectation

from

from me, ſhall proceed to aſk advice, of ſuch as I eſteem moſt wiſe, friendly and faithful; if after the mind of the Commiſſioners in Boſton is known, it appears that they conſent to leave me at liberty, with reſpect to the buſineſs they have imployed me in here."

In this ſuſpence he determined to aſk the advice of a number of gentlemen in the miniſtry, on whoſe judgment and friendſhip he could rely, and to act accordingly. Who upon his, and his people's deſire, met at Stockbridge, January 4, 1758. And having heard Mr. Edwards's repreſentation of the matter, and what his people had to ſay by way of objection againſt his removal, determined it was his duty to accept of the invitation to the preſidency of the college.

When they publiſhed their judgment and advice to Mr. Edwards and his people, he appeared uncommonly moved and affected with it, and fell into tears on the occaſion; which was very unuſual for him, in the preſence of others: and ſoon after ſaid to the gentlemen, who had given their advice, that it was matter of wonder to him, that they could ſo eaſily, as they appeared to do, get over the objections he had made againſt his removal, to be the head of a college; which appeared great and weighty to him. But as he thought it his duty to be directed by their advice, he ſhould now endeavor cheerfully to undertake it, believing he was in the way of his duty.

Accordingly, having had, by the application of the truſtees of the college, the conſent of the commiſſioners to reſign their miſſion; he girded up his loins, and ſet off from Stockbridge for Princeton in January. He left his family at Stockbridge, not to be removed until ſpring. He had two daughters at Princeton, Mrs. Burr, the widow of the late Preſident Burr, and his oldeſt daughter that was unmarried.

His arrival at Princeton was to the great ſatisfaction and joy of the college. And indeed all the greateſt friends to the college, and to the intereſt of religion, were highly ſatisfied and pleaſed with the appointment of Mr. Edwards to the preſidency of that college, and had their hopes and expectations greatly raiſed hereby. And his correſpondents and friends, and well-wiſhers to the college in Scotland, greatly approved of it.

The corporation met as ſoon as could be with conveniency, after his arrival at the college, when he was by them fixed in the preſident's chair.

While

While at Princeton, before his ſickneſs, he preached in the college-hall from Sabbath to Sabbath, to the great acceptance of the hearers: but did nothing as preſident, unleſs it was to give out ſome queſtions in divinity to the ſenior claſs, to be anſwered before him; each one having opportunity to ſtudy and write what he thought proper upon them. When they came together to anſwer them, they found ſo much entertainment and profit by it, eſpecially by the light and inſtruction Mr. Edwards communicated in what he ſaid upon the queſtions, when they had delivered what they had to ſay, that they ſpoke of it with the greateſt ſatisfaction and wonder.

During this time, Mr. Edwards ſeemed to enjoy an uncommon degree of the preſence of God. He told his daughters, he had had great exerciſe, concern and fear, relative to his engaging in that buſineſs; but ſince it now appeared, ſo far as he could ſee, that he was called of God to that place and work, he did cheerfully devote himſelf to it, leaving himſelf and the event with God, to order what ſeemed to Him good.

The Small-pox had now become very common in the country, and was then at Princeton, and likely to ſpread. And as Mr. Edwards had never had it, and inoculation was then practiſed with great ſucceſs in thoſe parts, he propoſed to be inoculated, if the phyſician ſhould adviſe to it, and the corporation would give their conſent.

Accordingly, by the advice of the phyſician, and conſent of the corporation, he was inoculated February 13. He had it favorably, and it was thought all danger was over: But a ſecondary fever ſet in; and by reaſon of a number of puſtles in his throat, the obſtruction was ſuch, that the medicines neceſſary to ſtanch the fever, could not be adminiſtered. It therefore raged until it put an end to his life on the 22d of March 1758, in the 55th year of his age.

After he was ſenſible that he ſhould not ſurvive that ſickneſs, a little before his death, he called his daughter to him, who attended him in his ſickneſs, and addreſſed her in a few words, which were immediately taken down in writing, as near as could be recollected, and are as follows:——

"DEAR LUCY,

"It ſeems to me to be the will of God that I muſt ſhortly "leave you; therefore give my kindeſt love to my dear wife, "and tell her, that the uncommon union, which has ſo long

"ſubſiſted

" ſubſiſted between us, has been of ſuch a nature, as I truſt is " ſpiritual, and therefore will continue forever : And I hope " ſhe ſhall be ſupported under ſo great a trial, and ſubmit cheer- " fully to the will of God. And as to my children, You are " now like to be left fatherleſs, which I hope will be an in- " ducement to you all to ſeek a Father, who will never fail you. " And as to my funeral, I would have it to be like Mr. Burr's; " and any additional ſum of money that might be expected to " be laid out that way, I would have it diſpoſed of to charita- " ble uſes." *

He ſaid but very little in his ſickneſs; but was an admirable inſtance of patience and reſignation to the laſt. Juſt at the cloſe of his life, as ſome perſons, who ſtood by, and expected he would breathe his laſt in a few minutes, were lamenting his death not only as a great frown on the college, but as having a dark aſpect on the intereſt of religion in general; to their ſurprize, not imagining that he heard, or would ever ſpeak another word, he ſaid, " TRUST IN GOD, AND YE NEED NOT FEAR." Theſe were his laſt words. And what could have been more ſuitable to the occaſion! And what need of more! In theſe is as much matter of inſtruction and ſupport, as if he had wrote a volume. This is the only conſolation to his bereaved friends, who are ſenſible of the loſs they, and the church of Chriſt have ſuſtained in his death; *God is allſufficient, and ſtill has the care of his church.*

He appeared to have the uninterrupted uſe of his reaſon to the laſt, and died with as much calmneſs and compoſure, to all appearance, as that with which one goes to ſleep.

The

* Preſident Burr ordered on his death bed, that his funeral ſhould not be attended with that pomp and coſt, by procuring and giving away a great number of coſtly mourning ſcarfs, &c. and the conſumption of great quantities of ſpirituous liquors; which is an extravagance that is become too cuſtomary in thoſe parts, eſpecially at the funerals of the great and the rich: and that nothing ſhould be expended but what was agreeable to the dictates of chriſtian decency. And that the ſum which muſt be expended at a *modiſh* funeral, over and above the neceſſary coſt of a *decent* one, ſhould be given to the poor, out of his eſtate.

It is to be wiſhed and hoped, that the laudable example of theſe two worthy Preſidents, in which they bear their dying teſtimony againſt a practice ſo unchriſtian, and of ſuch bad tendency ſo many ways, will have ſome good effect.

The phyſician who inoculated and conſtantly attended him in his ſickneſs, has the following words in his letter to Mrs. Edwards on this occaſion: "Never did any mortal man more "fully and clearly evidence the ſincerity of all his profeſſions, "by one continued, univerſal, calm, cheerful reſignation and "patient ſubmiſſion to the divine will, through every ſtage of "his diſeaſe, than he. Not ſo much as one diſcontented ex-"preſſion, nor the leaſt appearance of murmuring through the "whole. And never did any perſon expire with more per-"fect freedom from pain: not ſo much as one diſtorted hair, "but in the moſt proper ſenſe of the words, he really fell "aſleep."

PART IV.

Containing an Account of his MANUSCRIPTS, *and the* BOOKS *publiſhed by him.*

SECTION I.

His MANUSCRIPTS.

MR. Edwards has left a great many volumes in manuſcript, which he wrote in a miſcellaneous way on almoſt all ſubjects in divinity; which he did, not with any deſign they ſhould ever be publiſhed in the form in which they are; but for the ſatisfaction and improvement of his own mind, and that he might retain the thoughts which appeared to him worth preſerving. Some idea of the progreſs he had made, and the materials he had collected in this way, he gives in the foregoing letter to the Truſtees of Naſſau-Hall. He has wrote much on the prophecies of the Meſſiah, Juſtification, the Divinity of Chriſt, and the Eternity of Hell Torments. He wrote a great deal on the Bible, in the ſame way, by opening his thoughts on particular paſſages of it, as they occurred to him in reading or meditation; by which he has caſt much light on many parts of the Bible, which has eſcaped other interpreters. And by which his great and painful attention to the Bible, and making it the only rule of his faith, are manifeſt. If

If the public was willing to be at the coſt, and publiſhing books of divinity met with as much encouragement now, as it has ſometimes, there might be a number of volumes publiſhed from his manuſcripts, which would afford a great deal of new light and entertainment to the church of Chriſt: though they would be more imperfect, than if he himſelf had prepared them for public view.

As the method he took to have his miſcellaneous writings in ſuch order, as to be able with eaſe to turn to any thing he had wrote upon a particular ſubject, when he had occaſion, is perhaps as good as any, if not the beſt that has been propoſed to the public; ſome account of it will here be given, as what may be of advantage to young ſtudents, who have not yet gone into any method, and are diſpoſed to improve their minds by writing.

He *numbered* all his miſcellaneous writings. The firſt thing he wrote is No. 1, the ſecond No. 2, and ſo on. And when he had occaſion to write on any particular ſubject, he firſt ſet down the number, and then wrote the ſubject in capitals or large character, that it might not eſcape his eye, when he ſhould have occaſion to turn to it. As for inſtance, if he was going to write on the happineſs of Angels, and his laſt No. was 148, he would begin thus—149. ANGELS, their HAPPINESS.—And when he had wrote what he deſigned at that time on that ſubject, he would turn to an alphabetical table which he kept, and under the letter A, he would write, Angels, their happineſs, if this was not already in his alphabet; and then ſet down the number, 149, cloſe at the right hand of it. And if he had occaſion to write any new thoughts on this ſame ſubject; if the number of his miſcellanies was increaſed, ſo that his laſt number was 261, he would ſet down the number 262, and then the ſubject, as before. And when he had done writing for that time, he turned to his table, to the word Angels; and at the right hand of the number 149, ſet down 162. By this means he had no occaſion to leave any chaſms: but began his next ſubject where he left off his laſt. The number of his miſcellaneous writings ranged in this manner, amounts to above 1400. And yet by a table contained on a ſheet or two of paper, any thing he wrote can be turned to, at pleaſure.

SECTION

SECTION II.

His PUBLICATIONS.

MR. EDWARDS was greatly eſteemed and famed as an AUTHOR, both in Europe and America. His publications naturally raiſed in the reader of taſte and judgment, an opinion of his greatneſs and piety. His books met with a good reception in Scotland eſpecially, and procured him great eſteem and applauſe there. A gentleman of note there for his ſuperior genius and talents, has the following words concerning Mr. Edwards, in a letter to one of his correſpondents in America. "I looked on him as incomparably the greateſt "divine and philoſopher in Britain or her Colonies; and re- "joiced that one ſo eminently qualified for teaching divinity "was choſen Preſident of New-Jerſey College," And in another letter the ſame gentleman ſays, "Ever ſince I was ac- "quainted with Mr. Edwards's writings, I have looked upon "him as the greateſt divine this age has produced. And a "Rev. gentleman lately from Holland, ſays, That Mr. Ed- "wards's writings, eſpecially on the *Freedom of the Will*, "were had in great eſteem there: that the profeſſors of the cele- "brated academy, preſented their compliments to Preſident "Edwards. Several members of the claſſis of Amſterdam "gave their thanks, by him, to pious Mr. Edwards, for his "juſt obſervations on Mr. Brainerd's life; which book was "tranſlated in Holland, and was highly approved of by the "Univerſity of Utrecht—."

A brief account of what he publiſhed is therefore here ſubjoined.

A Sermon preached at Boſton, on 1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31, with a preface by one of the miniſters of Boſton.

A Sermon preached at Northampton, in the year 1734, from Math. xvi. 17, intitled, A divine and ſupernatural Light immediately imparted to the ſoul by the Spirit of God.

The Narrative which has been mentioned, wrote Nov. 6, 1736, which was firſt printed in London, and recommended by Dr. Watts, and Dr. Guyſe; and had two editions there. And then it had another edition in Boſton, in the year 1738, recommended by four of the ſenior Miniſters in Boſton. To which were prefixed five diſcourſes on the following ſubjects.

I. Juſtifi-

APPENDIX, No. I.

Containing a brief ACCOUNT *of* Mrs. ESTHER BURR, *and ſome Extracts of* LETTERS *wrote by her.*

MRS. BURR and her children were inoculated at the ſame time her father was, and were recovered when he died. But after ſhe was perfectly recovered to all appearance, ſhe was ſuddenly ſeized with a violent diſorder, which carried her out of the world in a few days: and which the phyſician ſaid he could call by no name but that of *a Meſſenger ſent, ſuddenly to call her out of the world.* She died April 7, 1758, ſixteen days after her father, in the 27th year of her age. She was married to Mr. Burr, June 29, 1752; by him ſhe had two children, a ſon and a daughter.

Mrs. Burr exceeded moſt of her ſex in the beauty of her perſon; and in a decent and eaſy geſture, behaviour and converſation: not ſtiff and ſtarch on the one hand, nor mean and indecent on the other, in her unaffected, natural freedom with perſons of all ranks, with whom ſhe converſed. Her genius was much more than common. She had a lively, ſprightly imagination, a quick and penetrating thought, and a good judgment. She had a peculiar ſmartneſs in her make and temper, which yet was conſiſtent with pleaſantneſs and good nature: and ſhe knew how to be pleaſant and facetious without treſpaſſing on the bounds of gravity, or ſtrict and ſerious religion. In ſhort, ſhe ſeemed to be formed to pleaſe, and eſpecially to pleaſe one of Mr. Burr's taſte and talents, in whom he was exceeding happy. But what crowned all her excellencies, and was her chief glory, was her *Religion.* She was hopefully converted when ſhe was ſeven or eight years old; and ſhe made a public profeſſion of religion when ſhe was about fifteen years of age; and her converſation and conduct to her death, was exemplary and as becometh godlineſs. But as her religious ſentiments and exerciſes, will beſt be underſtood by thoſe who were ſtrangers to her, by her own words; the following extracts are made from letters which ſhe wrote not long before her death.

The

The following is an extract from a letter she wrote to her mother, not long after Mr. Burr's death, dated at Princeton, October 7, 1757. After giving some account of Mr. Burr's death, and representing the sense she had of the greatness of the loss she and her children had sustained, she writes in the following words:

"NO doubt, dear Madam, it will be some comfort to you, to hear that God has not utterly forsaken, although he has cast down. I would speak it to the glory of God's name, that I think he has in an uncommon degree discovered himself to be an allsufficient God, a full fountain of all good. Although all streams were cut off, yet the fountain is left full.

"I think I have been enabled to cast my care upon him, and have found great peace and calm in my mind, such as this world cannot give, nor take.

"I have had uncommon freedom, and nearness to the throne of grace. God has seemed sensibly near in such a supporting and comforting manner, that I think I have never experienced the like.

"God has helped me to review my past and present mercies, with some heart-affecting degree of thankfulness.

"I think God has given me such a sense of the vanity of the world, and uncertainty of all sublunary enjoyments, as I never had before. The world vanishes out of my sight. Heavenly and eternal things appear much more real and important than ever before. I feel myself to be under much greater obligations to be the Lord's, than before this sore affliction.

"The way of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ has appeared more clear and excellent; and I have been constrained to venture my All upon Him; and have found great peace of soul, in what I hope has been actings of faith. Some parts of the Psalms have been very comforting and refreshing to my soul.

"I hope God has helped me to eye his hand in this awful dispensation; and to see the infinite right he has to his own, and to dispose of them as he pleases.

"Thus, dear Madam, I have given you some broken hints of the exercises and supports of my mind, since the *death* of HIM, whose memory and example, will ever be precious to me as my own life.

"O, dear Madam! I doubt not but I have your, and my honored father's prayers daily for me; but give me leave to intreat you both to request earnestly of the Lord, that I may never despise his chastenings, nor faint under this his severe stroke;

which

I. Juſtification by faith alone. II. Preſſing into the kingdom of God. III. Ruth's reſolution. IV. The juſtice of God in the damnation of Sinners. V. The excellency of Jeſus Chriſt.

Delivered at Northampton, chiefly at the time of the wonderful pouring out of the Spirit of God there.

The diſcourſe on Juſtification by faith alone, may be recommended as one of the beſt things that has been wrote on that ſubject; ſetting this truth in a moſt plain, ſcriptural, and convincing light; and as well worthy the careful peruſal of all chriſtians; eſpecially candidates for the miniſtry. The other diſcourſes are excellent, having much divinity in them, and tending above moſt that are publiſhed, to awaken the conſcience of the ſinner, and inſtruct and quicken the chriſtian.

A Sermon preached at Enfield, July 8, 1741, intitled, Sinners in the hands of an angry God. Preached at a time of great awakenings there; and attended with remarkable impreſſions on many of the hearers.

A Sermon on the diſtinguiſhing marks of a work of the Spirit of God, preached at New-Haven, Sept. 10, 1741, from 1 John iv. 1. publiſhed with great enlargements. This was reprinted in Scotland.

Some thoughts concerning the preſent revival of religion in New-England, and the way in which it ought to be acknowledged and promoted, humbly offered to the public, in a treatiſe on that ſubject, in five parts. Publiſhed in the year 1742. This had a ſecond edition in Scotland.

A treatiſe concerning religious affections. Publiſhed in the year 1746. Theſe three laſt have been mentioned before, with the particular occaſion and deſign of their publication.

A treatiſe intitled, An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement, and viſible union of God's people in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion, &c. Recommended by five of the principal miniſters in Boſton. Publiſhed in 1747. In which he ſhews his great acquaintance with ſcripture, and his attention to, and good underſtanding of the prophetic part of it.

An account of the life of the Rev. Mr. David Brainerd, miniſter of the goſpel and miſſionary to the Indians, &c. with reflections and obſervations thereon. Publiſhed in the year 1749.

An enquiry into the qualifications for full communion in the viſible church. Publiſhed in the year 1749, intended as

an explanation and vindication of his principles in the matter, which occaſioned his diſmiſſion from Northampton.

A reply to the Rev. Mr. William's anſwer to the foremen-tioned inquiry. Publiſhed in the year 1752.

A Sermon preached at Newark, before the Synod, Sept. 28, 1752, from Jam. ii. 19. intitled, True grace diſtinguiſh-ed from the experience of Devils.

A careful and ſtrict inquiry into the modern prevailing no-tion of that freedom of will, which is ſuppoſed to be eſſential to moral agency, &c. Publiſhed in the year 1754.

This is juſtly thought by good judges to be one of the grea-teſt efforts of the human mind, that has appeared, at leaſt in this century. In which the author ſhews that force and ſtrength of mind, that judgment, penetration and accuracy of thought, that juſtly intitles him to the character of one of the greateſt genius's of this age. This treatiſe doubtleſs goes fur-ther towards ſettling the main points in controverſy between Calviniſts and Arminians, than any thing that has been wrote: he having herein abundantly demonſtrated the chief principles on which Arminians build their whole ſcheme, to be falſe and moſt abſurd. Whenever therefore this book comes to be generally attended to, it will doubtleſs prove fatal to Armi-nian and Pelagian principles. This was reprinted in London, Anno 1762: and has been introduced by the Rev. T. Clap, Preſident of Yale College, to be recited there by the Students.

The great chriſtian doctrine of Original Sin defended; evi-dences of its truth produced, and arguments to the contrary anſwered. Containing, in particular, a reply to the objections and arguings of Dr. John Taylor, &c. Publiſhed in the year 1758. This was in the preſs when he died.

Beſides theſe, he publiſhed ſeveral Ordination Sermons, and ſome others, preached upon particular occaſions.

APPENDIX,

"Satan is alſo buſy ſhooting his darts; but, bleſſed be God, thoſe temptations of his, that uſed to overthrow me, as yet, have not touched me. O, to be delivered from the power of ſatan, as well as ſin! I can not help hoping the time is near. God is certainly fitting me for himſelf; and when I think it will be ſoon that I ſhall be called hence, the thought is tranſporting."

APPENDIX, No. II.

Containing a ſhort ſketch of Mrs. EDWARDS'S LIFE *and* CHARACTER.

MRS. Sarah Edwards, the amiable conſort of Preſident Edwards, did not long ſurvive him. In September ſhe ſet out in good health on a journey to Philadelphia, to take care of her two orphan grandchildren, which were now in that city; and had been, ſince the death of Mrs. Burr. As they had no relations in thoſe parts, Mrs. Edwards propoſed to take them into her own family. She arrived there by the way of Princeton, Sept. 21, in good health, having had a comfortable journey. But in a few days ſhe was ſuddenly ſeized with a violent dyſentery, which put an end to her life on the fifth day, October 2, 1758, in the 49th year of her age. She ſaid not much in her ſickneſs; being exerciſed moſt of the time with violent pain. On the morning of the day ſhe died, ſhe apprehended her death was near: when ſhe expreſſed her entire reſignation to God, and deſire that God might be glorified in all things; and that ſhe might be enabled to glorify him to the laſt: and continued in ſuch a temper, calm and reſigned, till ſhe died.

Her remains were carried to Princeton, which is about 40 miles from Philadelphia, and depoſited with Mr. Edwards's. Thus they who were in their lives remarkably lovely and pleaſant, in their death were not much divided. Here lie the father and mother, the ſon and daughter, who are laid together in the grave, within the ſpace of a little more than a year, though a few months before their dwelling was more than 150 miles apart. Two preſidents of the ſame college, and their

conſorts,

conſorts, than whom it will doubtleſs be hard to find four perſons more valuable and uſeful; in a few months are cut off from the earth forever; and by a remarkable providence are put, as it were, into one grave! And we the ſurvivors are left under the gloomy apprehenſion that theſe righteous are taken away from the evil to come!

Surely America is greatly emptied by theſe deaths! How much knowledge, wiſdom and holineſs is gone from the earth forever! And where are they who ſhall make good their ground!

Mrs. Edwards was born in New-Haven, in Connecticut, Jan. 9, 1709—10. Her father was the Rev. Mr. James Pierpoint, who was long an eminently godly and uſeful miniſter of the goſpel at New-Haven.* She was married to Mr. Edwards, July 20, 1727, in the 18th year of her age.

Though Mrs. Edwards's full character will not be attempted here, yet it is thought proper to mention a few things, in which ſhe excelled, and ſet an example worthy the imitation of all.

She remembered her creator in the days of her youth, and became truly and remarkably religious at about five years old. Was a more than ordinary beautiful perſon; of a pleaſant, agreeable countenance; of an amiable, courteous converſation and behaviour: the law of kindneſs was in her tongue.

She was eminent for her piety and experimental religion. Religious converſation was much her delight; and this ſhe promoted in all companies as far as was proper and decent for her: and her diſcourſe ſhewed her underſtanding in divine things, and the great impreſſion they had on her mind. The friends of true religion, and they who were ready to engage in religious converſation, and delighted in that which was moſt eſſential and practical in true religion, were her peculiar friends and intimates. To whom ſhe would open her mind freely, and tell them the exerciſes of her own heart; and what God had done for her ſoul, for their encouragement, and

* He was the eldeſt ſon of Mr. John Pierpoint of Roxbury, who came out of England. Her mother was Mrs. Mary Pierpoint, eldeſt daughter of the Rev. Mr. Samuel Hooker, miniſter of the goſpel at Farmington, in Connecticut, and ſon of the Rev. Mr. Thomas Hooker, once miniſter of the goſpel at Hartford, and famous as a divine, through all the churches in New-England.

which I am ſenſible there is great danger of, if God ſhould only deny me the ſupports that he has hitherto graciouſly granted.

" O, I am afraid I ſhall conduct ſo as to bring diſhonor on my God, and the religion which I profeſs!—No, rather let me die this moment, than be left to bring diſhonor on God's holy name.——I am overcome——I muſt conclude with once more begging, that as my dear parents remember themſelves, they would not forget their greatly afflicted daughter, (now a lonely widow) nor her fatherleſs children.

" My duty to my ever dear and honored parents, love to my brothers and ſiſters. From,

Dear Madam,

your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

ESTHER BURR."

" To my ever honored Father.

Princeton, November 2, 1757.

" HONORED SIR,

" YOUR moſt affectionate, comforting letter by my brother, was exceedingly refreſhing to me, although I was ſomething damped by hearing that I ſhould not ſee you until ſpring.* But it is my comfort in this diſappointment, as well as under all my afflictions, that God knows what is beſt for me, and for his own glory. Perhaps I lotted too much on the company and converſation of ſuch a near and dear and affectionate father and guide. I can not doubt but all is for the beſt, and I am ſatisfied that God ſhould order the affair of your removal as ſhall be for his glory, whatever comes of me.

" Since I wrote my mother's letter, God has carried me through new trials, and given me new ſupports. My little ſon has been ſick with the ſlow fever, ever ſince my brother left us, and has been brought to the brink of the grave. But I hope in mercy God is bringing him up again. I was enabled to reſign the child (after a ſevere ſtruggle with nature) with the greateſt freedom

* When Mr. Edwards wrote the letter ſhe refers to, he did not think of going to Princeton till ſpring; but he afterwards determined otherwiſe, and went in January, as is before related.

freedom. God ſhewed me that the child was not my own, but his; and that he had a right to recall what he had lent, whenever he thought fit; and I had no reaſon to complain, or ſay God was hard with me. This ſilenced me.

" But O, how good is God! He not only kept me from complaining, but comforted me by enabling me to offer up the child by faith, I think, if ever I acted faith. I ſaw the fulneſs there was in Chriſt for little infants, and his willingneſs to accept of ſuch as were offered to him. " Suffer little children " to come unto me, and forbid them not;" were comforting words.

" God alſo ſhewed me in ſuch a lively manner, the fullneſs there was in himſelf of all ſpiritual bleſſings, that I ſaid, Although all ſtreams were cut off, yet ſo long as my God lives, I have enough. He enabled me to ſay, " Although thou ſlay " me, yet will I truſt in thee."

" In this time of trial, I was led to enter into a renewed and explicit covenant with God, in a more ſolemn manner than ever before; and with the greateſt freedom and delight. After much ſelf-examination and prayer, I did give up myſelf and children to God, with my whole heart. Never until now, had I a ſenſe of the privilege we are allowed in covenanting with God! This act of ſoul left my mind in a quiet and ſteady truſt in God.

" A few days after this, one evening, in talking of the glorious ſtate my dear departed huſband muſt be in, my ſoul was carried out in ſuch longing deſires after this glorious ſtate, that I was forced to retire from the family to conceal my joy. When alone, I was ſo tranſported, and my ſoul carried out in ſuch eager deſires after perfection, and the full enjoyment of God, and to ſerve him uninterruptedly, that I think my nature would not have borne much more. I think, dear Sir, I had that night a foretaſte of heaven. This frame continued in ſome good degree the whole night. I ſlept but little, and when I did, my dreams were all of heavenly and divine things. Frequently ſince, I have felt the ſame in kind, though not in degree. Thus a kind and gracious God has been with me in ſix troubles, and in ſeven.

" But O Sir, what cauſe of deep humiliation and abaſement of ſoul have I, on account of remaining corruption; which I ſee working continually, eſpecially pride! O, how many ſhapes doth pride cloke itſelf in!

Satan

and excitement in the ways of God. Her mind appeared, to them who were moſt converſant with her, conſtantly to attend to divine things, even on all occaſions, and in all buſineſs of life.

The religious duties of the cloſet, ſhe was a great friend to, and took much delight in them. She highly prized ſocial worſhip. Was wont to attend the private meetings for religious worſhip, which were kept up at Northampton, while Mr. Edwards lived there. And promoted and attended meetings of perſons of her own ſex only, in order for prayer and religious converſation. She was a conſtant attender on public worſhip; and behaved with great gravity and ſerioufneſs in the houſe of God.

She paid proper deference to Mr. Edwards, and treated him with decency and reſpect at all times. As he was of a weakly, infirm conſtitution, and was peculiar and exact in his diet, ſhe was a tender nurſe to him; chearfully attending upon him at all times, and miniſtering to his comfort: and ſpared no pains to conform to his inclinations, and make things agreeable and comfortable to him.

She accounted it her greateſt glory, and that wherein ſhe could beſt ſerve God and her generation, in being a means of promoting Mr. Edwards's comfort and uſefulneſs in this way. And no perſon of diſcerning could be converſant in the family without obſerving and admiring the great harmony and mutual love and eſteem that ſubſiſted between them.

When ſhe herſelf laboured under bodily diſorders and pains, which was often the caſe, ſhe was not wont to be full of her complaints, and put on a dejected or ſour countenance, being out of humour with every body and every thing, as if ſhe was diſregarded and neglected: but ſhe would bare up under them with patience, and a kind of cheerfulneſs and good humour.

She was a good œconomiſt, managing her houſhold affairs with diſcretion; in which ſhe was laborious and diligent. She was very careful that nothing ſhould be waſted and loſt. And often, when ſhe did any thing to ſave a ſmall matter, or directed her children to do it in any inſtance, or ſaw them waſte any thing; ſhe would mention the words of our Saviour; which, ſhe ſaid, ſhe often thought of, as containing a maxim worth remembering: when, as the reaſon why his diſciples ſhould gather up the fragments, he ſays, *That nothing be loſt.* She took almoſt the whole care of the temporal affairs of the family,

without doors and within: and in this ſhe was peculiarly ſuited to Mr. Edwards's diſpoſition, who choſe to have no care of any worldly buſineſs.

She had an excellent way of governing her children: ſhe knew how to make them regard and obey her cheerfully without loud, angry words, or heavy blows. She ſeldom ſtruck her children a blow; and in ſpeaking to them uſed mild, gentle and pleaſant words. If any correction was needful, it was not her manner to give it in a paſſion. And when ſhe had occaſion to reprove and rebuke, ſhe would do it in few words, without heat and noiſe, with all calmneſs and gentleneſs of mind. And in her directions or reproofs, in any matters of importance, ſhe would addreſs herſelf to the reaſon of her children, that they might not only know her inclination and will, but at the ſame time, be convinced of the reaſonableneſs of it. She need ſpeak but once; ſhe was cheerfully obeyed; murmuring and anſwering again was not known among them. And the kind and gentle treatment they had from their mother, while ſhe ſtrictly and punctualy maintained her parental authority, ſeemed naturally to beget and promote a filial regard and reſpect; and lead them to a mild, tender treatment of each other; for quarelling and contention, as it frequently takes place among children, was not known among them. She carefully obſerved the firſt appearances of reſentment and ill-will towards any, in her young children; and did not connive at it and promote it, as many who have the care of children do, but was careful to ſhew her diſpleaſure at it, and ſuppreſs it to her utmoſt: not by angry, wrathful words and blows, which often provoke children to wrath, and ſtir up and confirm their iraſcible paſſions, rather than abate and ſuppreſs them.

As ſhe was ſenſible that in many reſpects, the chief care of forming children by government and inſtruction, naturally lies on mothers; as they are moſt with their children in their moſt pliable age, when they commonly receive impreſſions by which they are very much formed for life: ſo ſhe was very careful to do her part in this important buſineſs. And when ſhe met with any ſpecial difficulty in this matter, or foreſaw any, ſhe was wont to apply to Mr. Edwards for advice and aſſiſtance: and on ſuch occaſions they would both attend to it, as a matter of great importance.

But this was not all, in which ſhe expreſſed her care for her children. She thought that parents had great and important

duty

duty to do towards their children before they were capable of government and inſtruction. For them ſhe conſtantly and earneſtly prayed, and bore them on her heart before God, in all her ſecret and moſt ſolemn addreſſes to him; and that even before they were born. The evidence of her pregnancy, and conſideration that it was with a rational, immortal creature, which came into exiſtence in an undone, and infinitely dreadful ſtate, was ſufficient to lead her to bow before God daily for his bleſſing on it; even redemption, and eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt. So that through all the pain, labour and ſorrow, which attended her being mother of children, ſhe was in travel for them, that they might be born of God by having Chriſt formed in them.

As the law of kindneſs was in her tongue, ſo her hands were not withheld from beneficence and charity. She was always a friend and patroneſs of the poor and helpleſs; and much in acts of charity, as well as recommending it to others on all proper occaſions.

She was remarkable for her kindneſs to her friends and viſitants, who reſorted to Mr. Edwards's. She would ſpare no pains to make them welcome, and provide for their convenience and comfort. And ſhe was peculiarly kind to ſtrangers, who came to her houſe. She would take ſuch kind and ſpecial notice of ſuch, and ſo ſoon get acquainted with them, as it were, and ſhew ſuch regard and concern for their comfort, and ſo kindly offer what ſhe thought they needed, as to diſcover ſhe knew the heart of a ſtranger, and well underſtood how to do it good; and ſo as to oblige them to feel in ſome meaſure as if they were at home.

She made it her rule to ſpeak well of all, ſo far as ſhe could with truth, and juſtice to herſelf and others. She was not wont to dwell with delight on the imperfections and failings of any; and when ſhe heard perſons ſpeaking ill of others, ſhe would ſay what ſhe thought ſhe could with truth and juſtice in their excuſe; or divert the obloquy by mentioning thoſe things that were commendable in them. Thus ſhe was tender of every one's character, even of theirs who injured and ſpoke evil of her; and carefully guarded againſt the too common vice of evil ſpeaking and backbiting. She could bear injuries and reproach with great calmneſs and patience, without any diſpoſition to render evil for evil; but on the contrary, was ready to pity and forgive thoſe who appeared to be her enemies.

She

She had long told her intimate friends that ſhe had, after long ſtruggles and exerciſes, obtained, by God's grace, an habitual willingneſs to die herſelf, or part with any of her moſt near relatives. That ſhe was willing to bring forth children for death; and reſign up him whom ſhe eſteemed ſo great a bleſſing to her and her family, her neareſt partner, to the ſtroke of death, whenever God ſhould ſee fit to take him. And when ſhe had the greateſt trial in the death of Mr. Edwards, ſhe found the help and comfort of ſuch a diſpoſition. Her converſation and conduct on this occaſion was even to the admiration of her friends. It was ſuch as diſcovered that ſhe was ſenſible of the great loſs, ſhe and her children had ſuſtained in his death; and at the ſame time ſhewed, that ſhe was quiet and reſigned, and had thoſe inviſible ſupports and comforts by which ſhe could truſt in God with quietneſs, hope and humble joy.

They lived together in the married ſtate above thirty years. In which time they had eleven children; all which are now living, except the ſecond daughter, who died February, 14, 1748, (of whom the public have ſome account in the life of Mr. Brainerd, P. 251.) and their third daughter, Mrs. Burr, before mentioned; and their youngeſt daughter, named Elizabeth, who died ſince her parents. The ſurviving children are three ſons, and five daughters.

FINIS.

A

TREATISE

CONCERNING

RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS,

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.

Concerning the NATURE of the AFFECTIONS, and their IMPORTANCE in RELIGION.

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1 PETER i. 8.

Whom having not ſeen, ye love; in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.

IN theſe words the apoſtle repreſents the ſtate of the mind of the Chriſtians he wrote to, under the perſecutions they were then the ſubjects of. Theſe perſecutions are what he has reſpect to, in the two preceding verſes, when he ſpeaks of *the trial of their faith*, and of *their being in heavineſs through manifold temptations*.

Such trials are of threefold benefit to true religion. Hereby the truth of it is manifeſted, and it appears to be indeed *true religion:* they, above all other things, have a tendency to diſtinguiſh between true religion and falſe, and to cauſe the difference between them evidently to appear. Hence they are called by the name of *trials*, in the verſe nextly preceding the text, and in innumerable other places: they try the faith and religion of profeſſors, of what ſort it is, as apparent gold is

tried

tried in the fire, and manifeſted, whether it be true gold or no. And the faith of true Chriſtians being thus tried and proved to be true, is *found to praiſe, and honour, and glory*; as in that preceding verſe.

And then, theſe trials are of further benefit to true religion; they not only manifeſt the *truth* of it, but they make its genuine *beauty* and *amiableneſs* remarkably to appear. True virtue never appears ſo lovely, as when it is moſt oppreſſed: and the divine excellency of real Chriſtianity, is never exhibited with ſuch advantage, as when under the greateſt trials: then it is that true faith appears much more precious than gold; and upon this account, is *found to praiſe, and honour, and glory.*

And again, another benefit that ſuch trials are of to true religion, is, that they purify and increaſe it. They not only manifeſt it to be true, but alſo tend to refine it, and deliver it from thoſe mixtures of that which is falſe, which incumber and impede it; that nothing may be left but that which is true. They tend to cauſe the amiableneſs of true religion to appear to the beſt advantage, as was before obſerved; and not only ſo, but they tend to increaſe its beauty, by eſtabliſhing and confirming it, and making it more lively and vigorous, and purifying it from thoſe things that obſcured its luſtre and glory. As gold that is tried in the fire, is purged from its alloy, and all remainders of droſs, and comes forth more ſolid and beautiful; ſo true faith being tried as gold is tried in the fire, becomes more precious; and thus alſo is *found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory.* The apoſtle ſeems to have reſpect to each of theſe benefits, that perſecutions are of to true religion, in the verſe preceding the text.

And in the text, the apoſtle obſerves how true religion operated in the Chriſtians he wrote to, under their perſecutions, whereby theſe benefits of perſecution appeared in them; or what manner of operation of true religion, in them, it was, whereby their religion, under perſecution, was manifeſted to be *true* religion, and eminently appeared in the genuine *beauty* and *amiableneſs* of true religion, and alſo appeared to be *increaſed* and *purified*, and ſo was like to be *found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt.* And there were two kinds of operation, or exerciſe of true religion, in them, under their ſufferings, that the apoſtle takes notice of in the text, wherein theſe benefits appeared.

1. *Love*

1. *Love to Chriſt*; *Whom having not ſeen, ye love.* The world was ready to wonder, what ſtrange principle it was, that influenced them to expoſe themſelves to ſo great ſufferings, to forſake the things that were ſeen, and renounce all that was dear and pleaſant, which was the object of ſenſe. They ſeemed to the men of the world about them, as though they were beſide themſelves, and to act as though they hated themſelves; there was nothing in their view, that could induce them thus to ſuffer, and ſupport them under, and carry them through ſuch trials. But although there was nothing that was ſeen, nothing that the world ſaw, or that the Chriſtians themſelves ever ſaw with their bodily eyes, that thus influenced and ſupported them, yet they had a ſupernatural principle of love to ſomething *unſeen*; they loved Jeſus Chriſt, for they ſaw him ſpiritually, whom the world ſaw not, and whom they themſelves had never ſeen with bodily eyes.

2. *Joy in Chriſt.* Though their outward ſufferings were very grievous, yet their inward ſpiritual joys were greater than their ſufferings; and theſe ſupported them, and enabled them to ſuffer with cheerfulneſs.

There are two things which the apoſtle takes notice of in the text concerning this joy. 1. The manner in which it riſes, the way in which Chriſt, though unſeen, is the foundation of it, *viz.* by faith; which is the evidence of things not ſeen; *In whom, though now ye ſee him not, yet* believing, *ye rejoice.*— 2. The nature of this joy; *unſpeakable, and full of glory. Unſpeakable* in the *kind* of it; very different from worldly joys, and carnal delights; of a vaſtly more pure, ſublime, and heavenly nature, being ſomething ſupernatural, and truly divine, and ſo ineffably excellent; the ſublimity and exquiſite ſweetneſs of which, there were no words to ſet forth. Unſpeakable alſo in *degree*; it pleaſing God to give them this holy joy, with a liberal hand, and in large meaſure, in their ſtate of perſecution.

Their joy was *full of glory.* Although the joy was unſpeakable, and no words were ſufficient to deſcribe it; yet ſomething might be ſaid of it, and no words more fit to repreſent its excellency than theſe, that it was *full of glory*; or, as it is in the original, *glorified joy.* In rejoicing with this joy, their minds were filled, as it were, with a glorious brightneſs, and their natures exalted and perfected. It was a moſt worthy,

noble rejoicing, that did not corrupt and debaſe the mind, as many carnal joys do; but did greatly beautify and dignify it: it was a prelibation of the joy of heaven, that raiſed their minds to a degree of heavenly bleſſedneſs; it filled their minds with the light of God's glory, and made them themſelves to ſhine with ſome communication of that glory.

Hence the propoſition or doctrine, that I would raiſe from theſe words is this,

DOCT. *True religion, in great part, conſiſts in holy affections.*

We ſee that the apoſtle, in obſerving and remarking the operations and exerciſes of religion, in the Chriſtians he wrote to, wherein their religion appeared to be true and of the right kind, when it had its greateſt trial of what ſort it was, being tried by perſecution as gold is tried in the fire, and when their religion not only proved true, but was moſt pure, and cleanſed from its droſs and mixtures of that which was not true, and when religion appeared in them moſt in its genuine excellency and native beauty, and was found to praiſe, and honour, and glory; he ſingles out the religious affections of *love* and *joy*, that were then in exerciſe in them: theſe are the exerciſes of religion he takes notice of, wherein their religion did thus appear true and pure, and in its proper glory.

Here I would,

I. Shew what is intended by the *affections*.

II. Obſerve ſome things which make it evident, that a great part of true religion lies in the affections.

I. It may be inquired, what the affections of the mind are?

I anſwer, The affections are no other, than the more vigorous and ſenſible exerciſes of the inclination and will of the ſoul.

God has endued the ſoul with two faculties: One is that by which it is capable of perception and ſpeculation, or by which it diſcerns, and views, and judges of things; which is called the underſtanding. The other faculty is that by which the ſoul does not merely perceive and view things, but is ſome way inclined with reſpect to the things it views or conſiders; either is inclined *to them*, or is diſinclined, and averſe *from them*: or is the faculty by which the ſoul does not behold things, as an indifferent

indifferent unaffected ſpectator, but either as liking or diſliking, pleaſed or diſpleaſed, approving or rejecting. This faculty is called by various names: it is ſometimes called the *inclination*: and, as it has reſpect to the actions that are determined and governed by it, is called the *will*: and the mind, with regard to the exerciſes of this faculty, is often called the *heart*.

The exerciſes of this faculty are of two ſorts; either thoſe by which the ſoul is carried out towards the things that are in view, in *approving* of them, being pleaſed with them, and inclined to them; or thoſe in which the ſoul oppoſes the things that are in view, in *diſapproving* them, and in being diſpleaſed with them, averſe from them, and rejecting them.

And as the exerciſes of the inclination and will of the ſoul are various in their *kinds*, ſo they are much more various in their *degrees*. There are ſome exerciſes of pleaſedneſs or diſpleaſedneſs, inclination or diſinclination, wherein the ſoul is carried but a little beyond a ſtate of perfect indifference. And there are other degrees above this, wherein the approbation or diſlike, pleaſedneſs or averſion, are ſtronger; wherein we may riſe higher and higher, till the ſoul comes to act vigorouſly and ſenſibly, and the actings of the ſoul are with that ſtrength, that (through the laws of the union which the Creator has fixed between ſoul and body) the motion of the blood and animal ſpirits begins to be ſenſibly altered; whence oftentimes ariſes ſome bodily ſenſation, eſpecially about the heart and vitals, that are the fountain of the fluids of the body: from whence it comes to paſs, that the mind, with regard to the exerciſes of this faculty, perhaps in all nations and ages, is called *the heart*. And it is to be noted, that they are theſe more vigorous and ſenſible exerciſes of this faculty, that are called the *affections*.

The *will*, and the *affections* of the ſoul, are not two faculties; the affections are not eſſentially diſtinct from the will, nor do they differ from the mere actings of the will and inclination of the ſoul, but only in the livelineſs and ſenſibleneſs of exerciſe.

It muſt be confeſſed, that language is here ſomewhat imperfect, and the meaning of words in a conſiderable meaſure looſe and unfixed, and not preciſely limited by cuſtom, which governs the uſe of language. In ſome ſenſe, the affection of the ſoul differs nothing at all from the will and inclination, and the will never is in any exerciſe any further than it is *affected*; it is not moved out of a ſtate of perfect indifference, any otherwiſe than as it is *affected* one way or other, and acts nothing any further. But yet there are many actings of the will and

inclination,

inclination, that are not ſo commonly called *affections*: in every thing we do, wherein we act voluntarily, there is an exerciſe of the will and inclination, it is our inclination that governs us in our actions: but all the actings of the inclination and will, in all our common actions of life, are not ordinarily called affections. Yet, what are commonly called affections are not eſſentially different from them, but only in the degree and manner of exerciſe. In every act of the will whatſoever, the ſoul either likes or diſlikes, is either inclined or diſinclined to what is in view: theſe are not eſſentially different from thoſe affections of *love* and *hatred*: that liking or inclination of the ſoul to a thing, if it be in a high degree, and be vigorous and lively, is the very ſame thing with the affection of *love*: and that diſliking and diſinclining, if in a great degree, is the very ſame with *hatred*. In every act of the will *for*, or *towards* ſomething not preſent, the ſoul is in ſome degree inclined to that thing; and that inclination, if in a conſiderable degree, is the very ſame with the affection of *deſire*. And in every degree of the act of the will, wherein the ſoul approves of ſomething preſent, there is a degree of pleaſedneſs; and that pleaſedneſs, if it be in a conſiderable degree, is the very ſame with the affection of *joy* or *delight*. And if the will diſapproves of what is preſent, the ſoul is in ſome degree diſpleaſed, and if that diſpleaſedneſs be great, it is the very ſame with the affection of *grief* or *ſorrow*.

Such ſeems to be our nature, and ſuch the laws of the union of ſoul and body, that there never is in any caſe whatſoever, any lively and vigorous exerciſe of the will or inclination of the ſoul, without ſome effect upon the body, in ſome alteration of the motion of its fluids, and eſpecially of the animal ſpirits. And on the other hand, from the ſame laws of the union of ſoul and body, the conſtitution of the body, and the motion of its fluids, may promote the exerciſe of the affections. But yet, it is not the body, but the mind only, that is the proper ſeat of the affections. The body of man is no more capable of being really the ſubject of love or hatred, joy or ſorrow, fear or hope, than the body of a tree, or than the ſame body of man is capable of thinking and underſtanding. As it is the ſoul only that has ideas, ſo it is the ſoul only that is pleaſed or diſpleaſed with its ideas. As it is the ſoul only that thinks, ſo it is the ſoul only that loves or hates, rejoices or is grieved at what it thinks of. Nor are theſe motions of the animal ſpirits,

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and fluids of the body, any thing properly belonging to the nature of the affections; though they always accompany them, in the preſent ſtate; but are only effects or concomitants of the affections, that are entirely diſtinct from the affections themſelves, and no way eſſential to them; ſo that an unbodied ſpirit may be as capable of love and hatred, joy or ſorrow, hope or fear, or other affections, as one that is united to a body.

The *affections* and *paſſions* are frequently ſpoken of as the ſame; and yet, in the more common uſe of ſpeech, there is in ſome reſpect a difference; and *affection* is a word, that in its ordinary ſignification, ſeems to be ſomething more extenſive than *paſſion*, being uſed for all vigorous lively actings of the will or inclination; but paſſion for thoſe that are more ſudden, and whoſe effects on the animal ſpirits are more violent, and the mind more overpowered, and leſs in its own command.

As all the exerciſes of the inclination and will, are either in approving and liking, or diſapproving and rejecting; ſo the affections are of two ſorts; they are thoſe by which the ſoul is carried out to what is in view, cleaving *to* it, or *ſeeking* it; or thoſe by which it is averſe *from* it, and *oppoſes* it.

Of the former ſort are *love*, *deſire*, *hope*, *joy*, *gratitude*, *complacence*. Of the latter kind, are *hatred*, *fear*, *anger*, *grief*, and ſuch like; which it is needleſs now to ſtand particularly to define.

And there are ſome affections wherein there is a compoſition of each of the aforementioned kinds of actings of the will; as in the effection of *pity*, there is ſomething of the *former kind*, towards the perſon ſuffering, and ſomething of the *latter*, towards what he ſuffers. And ſo in *zeal*, there is in it high *approbation* of ſome perſon or thing, together with vigorous *oppoſition* to what is conceived to be contrary to it.

There are other mixed affections that might be alſo mentioned, but I haſten to

II. The ſecond thing propoſed, which was, to obſerve ſome things that render it evident, that true religion, in great part, conſiſts in the affections. And here,

1. What has been ſaid of the nature of the affections, makes this evident, and may be ſufficient, without adding any thing further, to put this matter out of doubt: for who will deny that true religion conſiſts in a great meaſure, in vigorous and lively actings of the *inclination* and *will* of the ſoul, or the fervent exerciſes of the *heart*?

That

That religion which God requires, and will accept, does not conſiſt in weak, dull, and lifeleſs wouldings, raiſing us but a little above a ſtate of indifference: God, in his word, greatly inſiſts upon it, that we be in good earneſt, *fervent in ſpirit*, and our hearts vigorouſly engaged in religion: Rom. xii. 11. "Be ye fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord." Deut. x. 12. "And now Iſrael, what doth the Lord thy God require of "thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, "and to love him, and to ſerve the Lord thy God with all "thy heart, and with all thy ſoul?" And chap. vi. 4, 5. "Hear, O Iſrael, the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou "ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all "thy ſoul, and with all thy might." It is ſuch a fervent, vigorous engagedneſs of the heart in religion, that is the fruit of a real circumciſion of the heart, or true regeneration, and that has the promiſes of life; Deut. xxx. 6. "And the Lord thy "God will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy ſeed, "to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all "thy ſoul, that thou mayſt live."

If we be not in good earneſt in religion, and our wills and inclinations be not ſtrongly exerciſed, we are nothing. The things of religion are ſo great, that there can be no ſuitableneſs in the exerciſes of our hearts, to their nature and importance, unleſs they be lively and powerful. In nothing is vigour in the actings of our inclinations ſo requiſite, as in religion; and in nothing is lukewarmneſs ſo odious. True religion is evermore a powerful thing; and the power of it appears, in the firſt place, in the inward exerciſes of it in the heart, where is the principal and original ſeat of it. Hence true religion is called the *power of godlineſs*, in diſtinction from the external appearances of it, that are *the form* of it, 2 Tim. iii. 5. "Having a form of godlineſs, but denying, the power of it." The Spirit of God, in thoſe that have ſound and ſolid religion, is a ſpirit of powerful holy affection; and therefore, God is ſaid *to have given them the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a ſound mind*, 2 Tim. i. 7. And ſuch, when they receive the Spirit of God, in his ſanctifying and ſaving influences, are ſaid to be *baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire*; by reaſon of the power and fervour of thoſe exerciſes the Spirit of God excites in their hearts, whereby their hearts, when grace is in exerciſe, may be ſaid to *burn within them*; as is ſaid of the diſciples, Luke xxiv. 32.

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The buſineſs of religion is, from time to time, compared to thoſe exerciſes, wherein men are wont to have their hearts and ſtrength greatly exerciſed and engaged; ſuch as running, wreſtling, or agonizing for a great prize or crown, and fighting with ſtrong enemies that ſeek our lives, and warring as thoſe that by violence take a city or kingdom.

And though true grace has various degrees, and there are ſome that are but babes in Chriſt, in whom the exerciſe of the inclination and will towards divine and heavenly things, is comparatively weak; yet every one that has the power of godlineſs in his heart, has his inclinations and heart exerciſed towards God and divine things, with ſuch ſtrength and vigour, that theſe holy exerciſes do prevail in him above all carnal or natural affections, and are effectual to overcome them: for every true diſciple of Chriſt, *loves him above father or mother, wife and children, brethren and ſiſters, houſes and lands; yea, than his own life.* From hence it follows, that where-ever true religion is, there are vigorous exerciſes of the inclination and will towards divine objects: but by what was ſaid before, the vigorous, lively, and ſenſible exerciſes of the will, are no other than the affections of the ſoul.

2. The Author of the human nature has not only given affections to men, but has made them very much the ſpring of mens actions. As the affections do not only neceſſarily belong to the human nature, but are a very great part of it; ſo (inaſmuch as by regeneration, perſons are renewed in the whole man, and ſanctified throughout) holy affections do not only neceſſarily belong to true religion, but are a very great part of that. And as true religion is of a practical nature, and God hath ſo conſtituted the human nature, that the affections are very much the ſpring of mens actions, this alſo ſhews, that true religion muſt conſiſt very much in the affections.

Such is man's nature, that he is very unactive, any otherwiſe than he is influenced by ſome affection, either *love* or *hatred*, *deſire*, *hope*, *fear*, or ſome other. Theſe affections we ſee to be the ſprings that ſet men a-going, in all the affairs of life, and engage them in all their purſuits: theſe are the things that put men forward, and carry them along, in all their worldly buſineſs; and eſpecially are men excited and animated by theſe, in all affairs, wherein they are earneſtly engaged, and which they purſue with vigor. We ſee the world of mankind to be exceeding

busy and active; and the affections of men are the springs of the motion: take away all *love* and *hatred*, all *hope* and *fear*, all *anger*, *zeal*, and affectionate *desire*, and the world would be, in a great measure, motionless and dead; there would be no such thing as activity amongst mankind, or any earnest pursuit whatsoever. It is affection that engages the covetous man, and him that is greedy of worldly profits, in his pursuits; and it is by the affections, that the ambitious man is put forward in his pursuit of worldly glory; and it is the affections also that actuate the voluptuous man, in his pursuit of pleasure and sensual delights: the world continues, from age to age, in a continual commotion and agitation, in a pursuit of these things; but take away all affection, and the spring of all this motion would be gone, and the motion itself would cease. And as in worldly things, worldly affections are very much the spring of mens motion and action; so in religious matters the spring of their actions are very much religious affections: he that has doctrinal knowledge and speculation only, without affection, never is engaged in the business of religion.

3. Nothing is more manifest *in fact*, than that the things of religion take hold of mens souls, no further than they *affect* them. There are multitudes that often hear the word of God, and therein hear of those things that are infinitely great and important, and that most nearly concern them, and all that is heard seems to be wholly ineffectual upon them, and to make no alteration in their disposition or behaviour; and the reason is, they are not affected with what they hear. There are many that often hear of the glorious perfections of God, his almighty power, and boundless wisdom, his infinite majesty, and that holiness of God, by which he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity, and the heavens are not pure in his sight, and of God's infinite goodness and mercy, and hear of the great works of God's wisdom, power and goodness, wherein there appear the admirable manifestations of these perfections; they hear particularly of the unspeakable love of God and Christ, and of the great things that Christ has done and suffered, and of the great things of another world, of eternal misery, in bearing the fierceness and wrath of almighty God, and of endless blessedness and glory in the presence of God, and the enjoyment of his dear love; they also hear the peremptory commands of God, and his gracious counsels and warnings, and the sweet invitations of the gospel; I say, they often hear these things, and yet remain as they were before,

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with no ſenſible alterations on them, either in heart or practice, becauſe they are not affected with what they hear; and ever will be ſo till they are affected. I am bold to aſſert, that there never was any conſiderable change wrought in the mind or converſation of any one perſon, by any thing of a religious nature, that ever he read, heard or ſaw, that had not his affections moved. Never was a natural man engaged earneſtly to ſeek his ſalvation; never were any ſuch brought to cry after wiſdom, and lift up their voice for underſtanding, and to wreſtle with God in prayer for mercy; and never was one humbled, and brought to the foot of God, from any thing that ever he heard or imagined of his own unworthineſs and deſervings of God's diſpleaſure; nor was ever one induced to fly for refuge unto Chriſt, while his heart remained unaffected. Nor was there ever a ſaint awakened out of a cold, lifeleſs frame, or recovered from a declining ſtate in religion, and brought back from a lamentable departure from God, without having his heart affected. And, in a word, there never was any thing conſiderable brought to paſs in the heart or life of any man living, by the things of religion, that had not his heart deeply affected by thoſe things.

4. The holy ſcriptures do every where place religion very much in the affections; ſuch as fear, hope, love, hatred, deſire, joy, ſorrow, gratitude, compaſſion, and zeal.

The ſcriptures place much of religion in godly *fear*; inſomuch that it is often ſpoken of as the character of thoſe that are truly religious perſons, that *they tremble at God's word*; that they *fear before him*, that *their fleſh trembles for fear of him*, and that *they are afraid of his judgments*, that *his excellency makes them afraid, and his dread falls upon them*; and the like: and a compellation commonly given the ſaints in ſcripture, is, *fearers of God*, or *they that fear the Lord*. And becauſe the fear of God is a great part of true godlineſs, hence true godlineſs in general, is very commonly called by the name of *the fear of God*; as every one knows, that knows any thing of the Bible.

So *hope* in God and in the promiſes of his word, is often ſpoken of in the ſcripture, as a very conſiderable part of true religion. It is mentioned as one of the three great things of which religion conſiſts, 1 Cor. xiii. 13. Hope in the Lord is alſo frequently mentioned as the character of the ſaints: Pſal. cxlvi. 5. "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help,

" whoſe hope is in the Lord his God." Jer. xvii. 7. " Bleſſed is " the man that truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe hope the Lord is." Pſal. xxxi. 24. " Be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen your " heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." And the like in many other places. Religious fear and hope are, once and again, joined together, as jointly conſtituting the character of the true ſaints; Pſal. xxxiii. 18. " Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them " that *fear* him, upon them that *hope* in his mercy." Pſal. cxlvii. 11. " The Lord taketh pleaſure in them that *fear* him, " in thoſe that *hope* in his mercy." Hope is ſo great a part of true religion, that the apoſtle ſays " we are ſaved by hope." Rom. viii. 24. And this is ſpoken of as the helmet of the Chriſtian ſoldier, 1 Theſſ. v. 8. " And for an helmet, the hope of ſalvation," and the ſure and ſtedfaſt anchor of the ſoul, which preſerves it from being caſt away by the ſtorms of this evil world, Heb. vi. 19. " Which hope we have as an anchor of the ſoul, " both ſure and ſtedfaſt, and which entereth into that within the " vail." It is ſpoken of as a great fruit and benefit which true ſaints receive by Chriſt's reſurrection, 1 Pet. i. 3. " Bleſſed " be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which " according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto " a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the " dead."

The ſcriptures place religion very much in the affection of *love*, in love to God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and love to the people of God, and to mankind. The texts in which this is manifeſt, both in the Old Teſtament and New, are innumerable. But of this more afterwards.

The contrary affection of *hatred* alſo, as having ſin for its object, is ſpoken of in ſcripture, as no inconſiderable part of true religion. It is ſpoken of as that by which true religion may be known and diſtinguiſhed, Prov. viii. 13. " The fear " of the Lord is to hate evil." And accordingly the ſaints are called upon to give evidence of their ſincerity by this, Pſal. xcvii. 10. " Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." And the pſalmiſt often mentions it as an evidence of his ſincerity; Pſal. ci. 2, 3. " I will walk within my houſe with a perfect heart. I will " ſet no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of " them that turn aſide." Pſal. cxix. 104. " I hate every falſe " way." So verſ. 128. Again Pſal. cxxxix. 21. " Do I not " hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?

So holy *deſire*, exerciſed in longings, hungerings, and thirſtings after God and holineſs, is often mentioned in ſcripture as

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an important part of true religion; If. xxvi. 8. "The desire " of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee." Psal. xxvii. 4. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and " and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of " the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the " Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Psal. xlii. 1, 2. "As " the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul " after thee, O God, my soul thirsteth for God, for the living " God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Psal. lxiii. 1, 2. "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for " thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is: to see thy " power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctua- " ry." Psal. lxxxiv. 1, 2. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, " O Lord, of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for " the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out " for the living God." Psal. cxix. 20. "My soul breaketh " for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times." So Psal. lxxiii. 25. and cxliii. 6, 7. and cxxx. 6. Cant. iii. 1, 2. and vi. 8. Such a holy desire and thirst of soul is mentioned, as one of those great things which renders or denotes a man truly blessed, in the beginning of Christ's sermon on the mount, Matt. v. 6. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after " righteousness: for they shall be filled." And this holy thirst is spoken of, as a great thing in the condition of a participation of the blessings of eternal life, Rev. xx. 6. "I will give " unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life " freely."

The scriptures speak of holy *joy*, as a great part of true religion. So it is represented in the text. And as an important part of religion, it is often exhorted to, and pressed, with great earnestness; Psal. xxxvii. 4. "Delight thyself in the Lord; " and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Psal. xcvii. 12. "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous." So Psal. xxxiii. 1. " Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous." Matt. v. 12. " Re- " joice and be exceeding glad." Phil. iii. 1. "Finally, bre- " thren, rejoice in the Lord." And chap. iv. 4. "Rejoice in " the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." 1 Thess. v. 16. " Rejoice evermore." Psal. cxlix. 2. "Let Israel rejoice in " him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in " their King." This is mentioned among the principal fruits of the spirit of grace, Gal. v. 22. "The fruit of the Spirit is

" love

" love, joy, &c.—The pſalmiſt mentions his holy joy, as an evidence of his ſincerity, Pſal. cxix. 14. "I have rejoiced in " the way of thy teſtimonies, as much as in all riches."

Religious *ſorrow*, mourning, and brokenneſs of heart, are alſo frequently ſpoken of as a great part of true religion. Theſe things are often mentioned as diſtinguiſhing qualities of the true ſaints, and a great part of their character; Matth. v. 4. " Bleſſed are they that mourn: for they ſhall be comforted." Pſal. xxxiv. 18. " The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a " broken heart: and ſaveth ſuch as be of a contrite ſpirit." Iſ. lxi. 1, 2. " The Lord hath anointed me—to bind up the " broken-hearted,—to comfort all that mourn." This godly ſorrow and brokenneſs of heart is often ſpoken of, not only as a great thing in the diſtinguiſhing character of the ſaints, but that in them, which is peculiarly acceptable and pleaſing to God; Pſal. li. 17. " The ſacrifices of God are a broken ſpirit: " a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe." Iſ. lvii. 15. " Thus ſaith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth " eternity, whoſe name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy " place; with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, " to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Chap. lxvi. 2. " To this man will I look, " even to him that is poor and of a contrite ſpirit.

Another affection often mentioned, as that in the exerciſe of which much of true religion appears, is *gratitude*; eſpecially as exerciſed in thankfulneſs and praiſe to God. This being ſo much ſpoken of in the book of Pſalms, and other parts of the holy ſcriptures, I need not mention particular texts.

Again, the holy ſcriptures do frequently ſpeak of *compaſſion* or *mercy*, as a very great and eſſential thing in true religion; inſomuch that good men are in ſcripture denominated from hence; and a merciful man, and a good man, are equivalent terms in ſcripture; Iſ. lvii. 1. " The righteous periſheth and " no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away." And the ſcripture chooſes out this quality, as that by which, in a peculiar manner, a righteous man is decyphered; Pſal. xxxvii. 21. " The righteous ſheweth mercy, and giveth;" and verſ. 26. " He is ever merciful, and lendeth." And Prov. xiv. 31. " He that honoureth the Lord, hath mercy on the poor." And Col. iii. 12. " Put ye on, as the elect of God, holy and " beloved, bowels of mercies, &c." This is one of thoſe great things, by which thoſe who are truly bleſſed are deſcribed

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by our Saviour, Matth. v. 7. "bleſſed are the merciful, for "they ſhall obtain mercy." And this Chriſt alſo ſpeaks of, as one of the weightier matters of the law, Matth. xxiii. 23. "Wo unto you, Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites; for ye "pay tithe of mint, and aniſe, and cummin, and have omitted "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith." To the like purpoſe is that, Mic. vi. 8. "He hath ſhewed thee, "O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of "thee, but to do juſtice, and love mercy, and walk humbly with "thy God?" And alſo that, Hoſ. vi. 6. "For I deſired mercy, "and not ſacrifice." Which ſeems to have been a text much delighted in by our Saviour, by his manner of citing it once and again, Matth. ix. 13. and xii. 7.

Zeal is alſo ſpoken of, as a very eſſential part of the religion of true ſaints. It is ſpoken of as a great thing Chriſt had in view, in giving himſelf for our redemption, Tit. ii. 14. "Who "gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all ini- "quity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of "good works." And this is ſpoken of, as the great thing wanting in the lukewarm Laodiceans, Rev. iii. 15, 16, 19.

I have mentioned but a few texts, out of an innumerable multitude, all over the ſcripture, which place religion very much in the affections. But what has been obſerved, may be ſufficient to ſhew that they who would deny that much of true religion lies in the affections, and maintain the contrary, muſt throw away what we have been wont to own for our Bible, and get ſome other rule, by which to judge of the nature of religion.

5. The ſcriptures do repreſent true religion, as being ſummarily comprehended in *love*, the chief of the affections, and fountain of all other affections.

So our bleſſed Saviour repreſents the matter, in anſwer to the lawyer, who aſked him, which was the great command- ment of the law, Matth. xxii. 37—40. "Jeſus ſaid unto him, "Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and "with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind. This is the firſt "and great commandment. And the ſecond is like unto it, "Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf. On theſe two "commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Which laſt words ſignify as much, as that theſe two commandments comprehend all the duty preſcribed, and the religion taught in

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the law and the prophets. And the apoſtle Paul does from time to time make the ſame repreſentation of the matter; as in Rom. xiii. 8. "He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the "law." And verſ. 10. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." And Gal. v. 14. "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, "even in this, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf." So likewiſe in 1 Tim. i. 5. "Now the end of the commandment "is charity, out of a pure heart, &c." So the ſame apoſtle ſpeaks of love, as the greateſt thing in religion, and as the vitals, eſſence and ſoul of it; without which, the greateſt knowledge and gifts, and the moſt glaring profeſſion, and every thing elſe which appertains to religion, are vain and worthleſs; and repreſents it as the fountain from whence proceeds all that is good, in 1 Cor. xiii. throughout; for that which is there rendered *charity*, in the original, the proper Engliſh is *love*.

Now, although it be true, that the love thus ſpoken of, includes the whole of a ſincerely benevolent propenſity of the ſoul, towards God and man; yet it may be conſidered, that it is evident from what has been before obſerved, that this propenſity or inclination of the ſoul, when in ſenſible and vigorous exerciſe, becomes *affection*, and is no other than affectionate love. And ſurely it is ſuch vigorous and fervent love which Chriſt ſpeaks of, as the ſum of all religion, when he ſpeaks of loving God with all our hearts, with all all our ſouls, and with all our minds, and our neighbour as ourſelves, as the ſum of all that was taught and preſcribed in the law and the prophets.

Indeed it cannot be ſuppoſed, when this affection of love is here, and in other ſcriptures, ſpoken of as the ſum of all religion, that hereby is meant the act, excluſive of the habit, or that the exerciſe of the underſtanding is excluded, which is implied in all reaſonable affection. But it is doubtleſs true, and evident from theſe ſcriptures, that the *eſſence* of all true religion lies in holy love; and that in this divine affection, and an habitual diſpoſition to it, and that light which is the foundation of it, and thoſe things which are the fruits of it, conſiſts the *whole* of religion.

From hence it clearly and certainly appears, that great part of true religion conſiſts in the affections. For love is not only one of the affections, but it is the firſt and chief of the affections, and the fountain of all the affections. From *love* ariſes *hatred* of thoſe things which are contrary to what we love, or

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which oppoſe and thwart us in thoſe things that we delight in: and from the various exerciſes of love and hatred, according to the circumſtances of the objects of theſe affections, as preſent or abſent, certain or uncertain, probable or improbable, ariſe all thoſe other affections of *deſire*, *hope*, *fear*, *joy*, *grief*, *gratitude*, *anger*, &c. From a vigorous, affectionate, and fervent *love to God*, will neceſſarily ariſe other *religious* affections; hence will ariſe an intenſe *hatred* and abhorrence of ſin, *fear* of ſin, and a *dread* of God's diſpleaſure, *gratitude* to God for his goodneſs, *complacence* and *joy* in God when God is graciouſly and ſenſibly preſent, and *grief* when he is abſent, and a joyful *hope* when a future enjoyment of God is expected, and fervent *zeal* for the glory of God. And in like manner, from a fervent *love to men*, will ariſe all other virtuous affections towards men.

6. The religion of the moſt eminent ſaints we have an account of in the ſcripture, conſiſted much in holy *affections*.

I ſhall take particular notice of three eminent ſaints, which have expreſſed the frame and ſentiments of their own hearts, and ſo deſcribed their own religion, and the manner of their intercourſe with God, in the writings which they have left us, that are a part of the ſacred canon.

The *firſt* inſtance I ſhall take notice of, is David, that *man after God's own heart*; who has given us a lively portraiture of his religion in the book of Pſalms. Thoſe holy ſongs of his he has there left us, are nothing elſe but the expreſſions and breathings of devout and holy *affections*: ſuch as an humble and fervent *love* to God, *admiration* of his glorious perfections and wonderful works, earneſt *deſires*, thirſtings, and pantings of ſoul after God, *delight* and *joy* in God, a ſweet and melting *gratitude* to God for his great goodneſs, an holy *exultation* and triumph of ſoul in the favour, ſufficiency, and faithfulneſs of God, his *love* to, and *delight* in the ſaints the excellent of the earth, his great *delight* in the word and ordinances of God, his *grief* for his own and others ſins, and his fervent *zeal* for God, and againſt the enemies of God and his church. And theſe expreſſions of holy affections, which the pſalms of David are every where full of, are the more to our preſent purpoſe, becauſe thoſe pſalms are not only the expreſſions of the religion of ſo eminent a ſaint, that God ſpeaks of as ſo agreeable to his mind; but were alſo, by the direction of the Holy Ghoſt,

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penned for the uſe of the church of God in its public worſhip, not only in that age, but in after ages; as being fitted to expreſs the religion of all ſaints, in all ages, as well as the religion of the pſalmiſt. And it is moreover to be obſerved, that David, in the book of Pſalms, ſpeaks not as a private perſon, but as the *pſalmiſt of Iſrael*, as the ſubordinate head of the church of God, and leader in their worſhip and praiſes; and in many of the pſalms, ſpeaks in the name of Chriſt, as perſonating him in theſe breathings forth of holy affection; and in many other pſalms, he ſpeaks in the name of the church.

Another inſtance I ſhall obſerve, is the apoſtle Paul; who was, in many reſpects, the chief of all the miniſters of the New Teſtament; being above all others, a choſen veſſel unto Chriſt, to bear his name before the Gentiles, and made the chief inſtrument of propagating and eſtabliſhing the chriſtian church in the world, and of diſtinctly revealing the glorious myſteries of the goſpel, for the inſtruction of the church in all ages; and (as has not been improbably thought by ſome) the moſt eminent ſervant of Chriſt, that ever lived, received to the higheſt rewards in the heavenly kingdom of his Maſter. By what is ſaid of him in the ſcripture, he appears to have been a perſon that was full of affection. And it is very manifeſt, that the religion he expreſſes in his epiſtles, conſiſted very much in holy affections. It appears by all his expreſſions of himſelf, that he was, in the courſe of his life, inflamed, actuated, and entirely ſwallowed up, by a moſt ardent *love* to his glorious Lord, eſteeming all things as loſs, for the excellency of the knowlege of him, and eſteeming them but dung that he might win him. He repreſents himſelf, as overpowered by this holy affection, and as it were compelled by it to go forward in his ſervice, through all difficulties and ſufferings, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. And his epiſtles are full of expreſſions of an overflowing affection towards the people of Chriſt: he ſpeaks of his *dear love* to them, 2 Cor. xii. 19. Phil. iv. 1. 2 Tim. i. 2; of his *abundant love*, 2 Cor. ii. 4; and of his *affectionate and tender love*, as of a nurſe towards her children, 1 Theſſ. ii. 7, 8. "But we were "gentle among you, even as a nurſe cheriſheth her children: "ſo, being affectionately deſirous of you, we were willing to "have imparted unto you, not the goſpel of God only, but alſo "our own ſouls, becauſe you were dear unto us." So alſo he ſpeaks of his *bowels of love*, Phil. i. 8. Philem. 5, 12, and 20. So he ſpeaks of his *earneſt care* for others, 2 Cor. viii. 16. and

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of his *bowels of pity* or *mercy* towards them, Phil. ii. 1; and of his concern for others, even to *anguiſh of heart*, 2 Cor. ii. 4. "For out of much affliction and anguiſh of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears; not that you ſhould be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." He ſpeaks of the *great conflict* of his ſoul for them, Col. ii. 1. He ſpeaks of *great and continual grief* that he had *in his heart* from *compaſſion* to the Jews, Rom. ix. 2. He ſpeaks of *his mouth's being opened, and his heart enlarged* towards Chriſtians, 2 Cor. vi. 11. "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged." He often ſpeaks of his *affectionate and longing deſires*, 1 Theſſ. ii. 8. Rom. i. 11. Phil. i. 8. and Chap. iv. 1. 2 Tim. i. 4. The ſame apoſtle is very often, in his epiſtles, expreſſing the affection of *joy*, 2 Cor. i. 12. and Chap. vii. 7. and verſ. 9. 16. Phil. i. 4. and Chap. ii. 1, 2. and Chap. iii. 3. Col. i. 24. 1 Theſſ. iii. 9. He ſpeaks of his *rejoicing with great joy*, Phil. iv. 10. Philem. 1. 7. of his *joying and rejoicing*, Phil. ii. 1. 7. and of his *rejoicing exceedingly*, 2 Cor. vii. 13. and of his being *filled with comfort, and being exceeding joyful*, 2 Cor. vii. 4. He ſpeaks of himſelf as *always rejoicing*, 2 Cor. vi. 10. So he ſpeaks of the *triumphs* of his ſoul, 2 Cor. ii. 14. and of *his glorying in tribulation*, 2 Theſſ. i. 4. and Rom. v. 3. He alſo expreſſes the affection of *hope*; in Phil. i. 20. he ſpeaks of his *earneſt expectation*, and *his hope*. He likewiſe expreſſes an affection of *godly jealouſy*, 2 Cor. xi. 2, 3. And it appears by his whole hiſtory, after his converſion, in the Acts, and alſo by all his epiſtles, and the accounts he gives of himſelf there, that the affection of *zeal*, as having the cauſe of his Maſter, and the intereſt and proſperity of his church, for its object, was mighty in him, continually inflaming his heart, ſtrongly engaging to thoſe great and conſtant labours he went through, in inſtructing, exhorting, warning, and reproving others, *travailing in birth with them*; conflicting with thoſe powerful and innumerable enemies who continually oppoſed him, wreſtling with principalities and powers, not fighting as one who beats the air, running the race ſet before him, continually preſſing forwards through all manner of difficulties and ſufferings; ſo that others thought him quite beſide himſelf. And how full he was of affection, does further appear by his being ſo full of tears; in 2 Cor. ii. 4. he ſpeaks of his *many tears*; and ſo Acts xx. 19. and of his *tears* that he ſhed *continually*, *night and day*, verſ. 31.

Now if any one can conſider theſe accounts given in the ſcripture of this great apoſtle, and which he gives of himſelf, and yet not ſee that his religion conſiſted much in affection, muſt have a ſtrange faculty of managing his eyes, to ſhut out the light which ſhines moſt full in his face.

The other inſtance I ſhall mention, is of the apoſtle John, that beloved diſciple, who was the neareſt and deareſt to his Maſter of any of the twelve, and was by him admitted to the greateſt privileges of any of them; being not only one of the three who were admitted to be preſent with him in the mount at his transfiguration, and at the raiſing of Jairus's daughter, and whom he took with him when he was in his agony, and one of the three ſpoken of by the apoſtle Paul, as the three main pillars of the Chriſtian church; but was favored above all, in being admitted to lean on his Maſter's boſom, at his laſt ſupper, and in being choſen by Chriſt, as the diſciple to whom he would reveal his wonderful diſpenſations towards his church, to the end of time; as we have an account in the book of Revelation; and to ſhut up the canon of the New Teſtament, and of the whole ſcripture; being preſerved much longer than all the reſt of the apoſtles, to ſet all things in order in the Chriſtian church, after their death.

It is evident by all his writings, (as is generally obſerved by divines) that he was a perſon remarkably full of affection: his addreſſes to thoſe whom he wrote to, being inexpreſſibly tender and pathetical, breathing nothing but the moſt fervent love; as though he were all made up of ſweet and holy affection. The proofs of which cannot be given without diſadvantage, unleſs we ſhould tranſcribe his whole writings.

7. He whom God ſent into the world, to be the light of the world, and head of the whole church, and the perfect example of true religion and virtue, for the imitation of all, the Shepherd whom the whole flock ſhould follow where-ever he goes, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, was a perſon who was remarkably of a tender and affectionate heart; and his virtue was expreſſed very much in the exerciſe of holy affections. He was the greateſt inſtance of ardency, vigour and ſtrength of *love*, to both God and man, that ever was. It was theſe affections which got the victory, in that mighty ſtruggle and conflict of his affections, in his agonies, when *he prayed more earneſtly, and offered ſtrong crying and tears*, and wreſtled in tears and in blood. Such was the power of the exerciſes of his holy love,

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that they were ſtronger than death, and in that great ſtruggle, overcame thoſe ſtrong exerciſes of the natural affections of fear and grief, when he was ſore amazed, and his ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death. And he alſo appeared to be full of affection, in the courſe of his life. We read of his great *zeal*, fulfilling that in the 69th Pſalm, "The zeal of thine houſe "hath eaten me up," John ii. 17. We read of his *grief* for the ſins of men, Mark iii. 5. "He looked round about on them "with anger, being grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts;" and his breaking forth in tears and exclamations, from the conſideration of the ſin and miſery of ungodly men, and on the ſight of the city of Jeruſalem, which was full of ſuch inhabitants, Luke xix. 41, 42. "And when he was come near, he beheld "the city, and wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even "thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto "thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." With Chap. xiii. 34. "O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, which killeſt the "prophets, and ſtoneſt them that are ſent unto thee: how "often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen "doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not?" We read of Chriſt's earneſt *deſire*, Luke xxii. 15. "With de"ſire have I deſired to eat this paſſover with you before I "ſuffer." We often read of the affection of *pity* or *compaſſion* in Chriſt, Matth. xv. 32. and xviii. 34. Luke vii. 13. and of his *being moved with compaſſion*, Matth. ix. 36. and xiv. 14. and Mark vi. 34. And how tender did his heart appear to be, on occaſion of Mary's and Martha's mourning for their brother, and coming to him with their complaints and tears? their tears ſoon drew tears from his eyes; he was affected with their grief, and *wept* with them; though he knew their ſorrow ſhould ſo ſoon be turned into joy, by their brother's being raiſed from the dead; ſee John xi. And how ineffably affectionate was that laſt and dying diſcourſe, which Jeſus had with his eleven diſciples the evening before he was crucified; when he told them he was going away, and foretold them the great difficulties and ſufferings they ſhould meet with in the world, when he was gone; and comforted and counſelled them, as his dear little children; and bequeathed to them his Holy Spirit, and therein his peace, and his comfort and joy, as it were in his laſt will and teſtament, in the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John; and concluded the whole with that affectionate interceſſory prayer for them, and his whole church, in chapter xvii. Of all the diſcourſes ever penned, or uttered by the mouth of any man, this ſeems to be the moſt affectionate, and affecting.

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8. The religion of heaven conſiſts very much in affection.

There is doubtleſs true religion in heaven, and true religion in its utmoſt purity and perfection. But according to the ſcripture repreſentation of the heavenly ſtate, the religion of heaven conſiſts chiefly in holy and mighty *love* and *joy*, and the expreſſion of theſe in moſt fervent and exalted praiſes. So that the religion of the ſaints in heaven, conſiſts in the ſame things with that religion of the ſaints on earth, which is ſpoken of in our text, viz. *love*, and *joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*. Now, it would be very fooliſh to pretend, that becauſe the ſaints in heaven be not united to fleſh and blood, and have no animal fluids to be moved (through the laws of union of ſoul and body) with thoſe great emotions of their ſouls, that therefore their exceeding love and joy are no affections—We are not ſpeaking of the affections of the body, but of the affections of the ſoul, the chief of which are *love* and *joy*. When theſe are in the ſoul, whether that be in the body or out of it, the ſoul is affected and moved. And when they are in the ſoul, in that ſtrength in which they are in the ſaints in heaven, the ſoul is mightily affected and moved, or, which is the ſame thing, has great affections. It is true, we do not experimentally know what love and joy are in a ſoul out of a body, or in a glorified body; *i. e.* we have not had experience of love and joy in a ſoul in theſe circumſtances; but the ſaints on earth do know what divine love and joy in the ſoul are, and they know what love and joy are of the ſame kind with the love and joy which are in heaven, in ſeparate ſouls there. The love and joy of the ſaints on earth, is the beginning and dawning of the light, life, and bleſſedneſs of heaven, and is like their love and joy there; or rather, the ſame in nature, though not the ſame with it, or like to it, in degree and circumſtances. This is evident by many ſcriptures, as Prov. iv. 18. John iv. 14. and chap. vi. 40, 47, 50, 51, 54, 58. 1 John iii. 15. 1 Cor. xiii. 8—12. It is unreaſonable therefore to ſuppoſe, that the love and joy of the ſaints in heaven, not only differ in degree and circumſtances, from the holy love and joy of the ſaints on earth, but is ſo entirely different in nature, that they are no affections; and merely becauſe they have no blood and animal ſpirits to be ſet in motion by them, which motion of the blood and animal ſpirits is not of the eſſence of theſe affections, in men on the earth, but the effect of them: although by their reaction they may make ſome circumſtantial difference in the ſenſation of the mind. There is a ſenſation of the mind which loves and

rejoices,

rejoices, that is antecedent to any effects on the fluids of the body; and this ſenſation of the mind, therefore, does not depend on theſe motions in the body, and ſo may be in the ſoul without the body. And where-ever there are the exerciſes of love and joy, there is that ſenſation of the mind, whether it be in the body, or out; and that inward ſenſation, or kind of ſpiritual ſenſe, or feeling, and motion of the ſoul, is what is called affection; the ſoul when it thus feels, (if I may ſo ſay) and is thus moved, is ſaid to be affected, and eſpecially when this inward ſenſation and motion are to a very high degree, as they are in the ſaints in heaven. If we can learn any thing of the ſtate of heaven from the ſcripture, the love and joy that the ſaints have there, is exceeding great and vigorous; impreſſing the heart with the ſtrongeſt and moſt lively ſenſation of inexpreſſible ſweetneſs, mightily moving, animating, and engaging them, making them like to a flame of fire. And if ſuch love and joy be not affections, then the word *affection* is of no uſe in language.—Will any ſay, that the ſaints in heaven, in beholding the face of their Father, and the glory of their Redeemer, and contemplating his wonderful works, and particularly his laying down his life for them, have their hearts nothing moved and affected by all which they behold or conſider?

Hence, therefore, the *religion of heaven*, conſiſting chiefly in holy love and joy, conſiſts very much in affection: and therefore, undoubtedly, *true religion* conſiſts very much in affection. The way to learn the true nature of any thing, is to go where that thing is to be found in its purity and perfection. If we would know the nature of true gold, we muſt view it, not in the oar, but when it is refined. If we would learn what true religion is, we muſt go where there is true religion, and nothing but true religion, and in its higheſt perfection, without any defect or mixture. All who are truly religious are not of this world, they are ſtrangers here, and belong to heaven; they are born from above, heaven is their native country, and the nature which they receive by this heavenly birth, is an heavenly nature, they receive *an anointing from above*; that principle of true religion which is in them, is a communication of the religion of heaven; their grace is the dawn of glory; and God fits them for that world by conforming them to it.

9. This appears from the nature and deſign of the ordinances and duties, which God hath appointed, as means and expreſſions of true religion.

To

To inſtance in the duty of prayer: It is manifeſt, we are not appointed, in this duty, to declare God's perfections, his majeſty, holineſs, goodneſs, and allſufficiency, and our own meanneſs, emptineſs, dependence, and unworthineſs, and our wants and deſires, to inform God of theſe things, or to incline his heart, and prevail with him to be willing to ſhew us mercy; but ſuitably to affect our own hearts with the things we expreſs, and ſo to prepare us to receive the bleſſings we aſk. And ſuch geſtures, and manner of external behaviour in the worſhip of God, which cuſtom has made to be ſignifications of humility and reverence, can be of no further uſe, than as they have ſome tendency to affect our own hearts, or the hearts of others.

And the duty of ſinging praiſes to God, ſeems to be appointed wholly to excite and expreſs religious affections. No other reaſon can be aſſigned, why we ſhould expreſs ourſelves to God in verſe, rather than in proſe, and do it with muſic, but only, that ſuch is our nature and frame, that theſe things have a tendency to move our affections.

The ſame thing appears in the nature and deſign of the ſacraments, which God hath appointed. God conſidering our frame, hath not only appointed that we ſhould be told of the great things of the goſpel, and of the redemption of Chriſt, and inſtructed in them by his word; but alſo that they ſhould be, as it were, exhibited to our view, in ſenſible repreſentations, in the ſacraments, the more to affect us with them.

And the impreſſing divine things on the hearts and affections of men, is evidently one great and main end for which God has ordained, that his word delivered in the holy ſcriptures, ſhould be opened, applied, and ſet home upon men, in preaching. And therefore it does not anſwer the aim which God had in this inſtitution, merely for men to have good commentaries and expoſitions on the ſcripture, and other good books of divinity; becauſe, although theſe may tend, as well as preaching, to give men a good doctrinal or ſpeculative underſtanding of the things of the word of God, yet they have not an equal tendency to impreſs them on mens hearts and affections. God hath appointed a particular, and lively application of his word to men, in the preaching of it, as a fit means to affect ſinners with the importance of the things of religion, and their own miſery, and neceſſity of a remedy, and the glory and ſufficiency of a remedy provided; and to ſtir up the pure

minds

minds of the ſaints, and quicken their affections, by often bringing the great things of religion to their remembrance, and ſetting them before them in their proper colours, though they know them, and have been fully inſtructed in them already, 2 Pet. i. 12, 13. And particularly, to promote thoſe two affections in them, which are ſpoken of in the text, *love* and *joy*: "Chriſt gave ſome, apoſtles; and ſome, prophets; and ſome, "evangeliſts; and ſome, paſtors and teachers; that the body "of Chriſt might be edified in love," Eph. iv. 11, 12, 16. The apoſtle, in inſtructing and counſelling Timothy, concerning the work of the miniſtry, informs him, that the great end of that word which a miniſter is to preach, is *love* or *charity*, 1 Tim. i. 3, 4, 5. And another affection which God has appointed preaching as a means to promote in the ſaints, is *joy*; and therefore miniſters are called *helpers of their joy*, 2 Cor. i. 24.

10. It is an evidence that true religion, or holineſs of heart, lies very much in the affection of the heart, that the ſcriptures place the ſin of the heart very much in *hardneſs of heart*. Thus the ſcriptures do every where. It was hardneſs of heart, which excited grief and diſpleaſure in Chriſt towards the Jews, Mark iii. 5. "He looked round about on them with anger, "being grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts." It is from mens having ſuch a heart as this, that they treaſure up wrath for themſelves; Rom, ii. 5. "After thy hardneſs and impeni-"tent heart, treaſureſt up unto thyſelf wrath againſt the day "of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." The reaſon given why the houſe of Iſrael would not obey God, was, that they were hard-hearted; Ezek. iii. 7. "But the "houſe of Iſrael will not hearken unto thee; for they will not "hearken unto me: for all the houſe of Iſrael are impudent "and hard-hearted." The wickedneſs of that perverſe rebellious generation in the wilderneſs, is aſcribed to the hardneſs of their hearts; Pſal. xcv. 7—10. "To-day if ye will hear my "voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as "in the day of temptation in the wilderneſs; when your fa-"thers tempted me, proved me, and ſaw my work: forty "years long was I grieved with this generation, and ſaid, It "is a people that do err in their heart, &c."—This is ſpoken of as what prevented Zedekiah's turning to the Lord, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. "He ſtiffened his neck, and hardened his heart "from turning to the Lord God of Iſrael." This principle is

ſpoken

ſpoken of, as that from whence men are without the fear of God, and depart from God's ways: Iſ. lxiii. 17. "O Lord, "why haſt thou made us to err from thy ways? and harden- "ed our heart from thy fear?" And mens rejecting Chriſt, and oppoſing Chriſtianity, is laid to this principle; Acts xix. 9. "But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but "ſpake evil of that way before the multitude."—God's leaving men to the power of the ſin and corruption of the heart, is often expreſſed by God's hardening their hearts; Rom. ix. 18. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, "and whom he will, he hardeneth." John xii. 40. "He hath "blinded their minds, and hardened their hearts." And the apoſtle ſeems to ſpeak of *an evil heart, that departs from the living God*, and *a hard heart*, as the ſame thing, Heb. iii. 8. "Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, &c." verſ. 12, 13, "Take heed, brethren, leſt there be in any of you an evil "heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God: but ex- "hort one another daily while it is called, To-day; leſt any "of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin." And that great work of God in converſion, which conſiſts in delivering a perſon from the power of ſin, and mortifying corruption, is expreſſed, once and again, by God's "taking away "the heart of ſtone, and giving an heart of fleſh," Ezek. xi. 19. and chap. xxxvi. 26.

Now, by a hard heart, is plainly meant an unaffected heart, or a heart not eaſy to be moved with virtuous affections, like a ſtone, inſenſible, ſtupid, unmoved, and hard to be impreſſed. Hence the hard heart is called a *ſtony heart*, and is oppoſed to an *heart of fleſh*, that has feeling, and is ſenſibly touched and moved. We read in ſcripture of a *hard heart*, and a *tender heart*: and doubtleſs we are to underſtand theſe, as contrary the one to the other. But what is a tender heart, but a heart which is eaſily impreſſed with what ought to affect it? God commends Joſiah, becauſe his heart was tender: and it is evident by thoſe things which are mentioned as expreſſions and evidences of this tenderneſs of heart, that by his heart being tender is meant, his heart being eaſily moved with religious and pious affection; 2 Kings xxii. 19. "Becauſe thine heart "was tender, and thou haſt humbled thyſelf before the Lord, "when thou heardſt what I ſpake againſt this place, and "againſt the inhabitants thereof, that they ſhould become a "deſolation and a curſe, and haſt rent thy clothes, and wept

"before

" before me, I alſo have heard thee, ſaith the Lord." And this is one thing, wherein it is neceſſary we ſhould *become as little children, in order to our entering into the kingdom of God*, even that we ſhould have our hearts tender, and eaſily affected and moved in ſpiritual and divine things, as little children have in other things.

It is very plain in ſome places, in the texts themſelves, that by hardneſs of heart is meant a heart void of affection. So, to ſignify the oſtrich's being without natural affection to her young, it is ſaid, Job xxxix. 16. " She hardeneth her heart " againſt her young ones, as though they were not hers." So a perſon having a heart unaffected in time of danger, is expreſſed by his hardening his heart, Prov. xxviii. 14. " Happy is " the man that feareth alway : but he that hardeneth his heart, " ſhall fall into miſchief."

Now therefore ſince it is ſo plain, that by a hard heart, in ſcripture, is meant a heart deſtitute of pious affections, and ſince alſo the ſcriptures do ſo frequently place the ſin and corruption of the heart in hardneſs of heart ; it is evident, that the grace and holineſs of the heart, on the contrary, muſt, in a great meaſure, conſiſt in its having pious affections, and being eaſily ſuſceptive of ſuch affection. Divines are generally agreed, that ſin radically and fundamentally conſiſts in what is negative, or privative, having its root and foundation in a privation or want of holineſs. And therefore undoubtedly, if it be ſo that ſin does very much conſiſt in hardneſs of heart, and ſo in the want of pious affections of heart, holineſs does conſiſt very much *in thoſe pious affections*.

I am far from ſuppoſing that all affections do ſhew a tender heart : hatred, anger, vain glory, and other ſelfiſh and ſelf-exalting affections, may greatly prevail in the hardeſt heart. But yet it is evident, that *hardneſs of heart*, and *tenderneſs of heart*, are expreſſions that relate to the affections of the heart, and denote the heart's being ſuſceptible of, or ſhut up againſt, *certain affections* ; of which I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more afterwards.

Upon the whole, I think it clearly and abundantly evident that true religion lies very much in the affections. Not that I think theſe arguments prove, that religion in the hearts of the truly godly, is ever in exact proportion to the degree of affection, and preſent emotion of the mind : for undoubtedly, there is much affection in the true ſaints which is not ſpiritual ; their

religious affections are often mixed; all is not from grace, but much from nature. And though the affections have not their ſeat in the body, yet the conſtitution of the body may very much contribute to the preſent emotion of the mind. And the degree of religion is rather to be judged of by the fixedneſs and ſtrength of the habit that is exerciſed in affection, whereby holy affection is habitual, than by the degree of the preſent exerciſe: and the ſtrength of that habit is not always in proportion to outward effects and manifeſtations, or inward effects, in the hurry and vehemence, and ſudden changes of the courſe of the thoughts of the mind. But yet it is evident, that religion conſiſts ſo much in affection, as that without holy affection there is no true religion: and no light in the underſtanding is good, which does not produce holy affection in the heart; no habit or principle in the heart is good, which has no ſuch exerciſe; and no external fruit is good, which does not proceed from ſuch exerciſes.

Having thus conſidered the evidence of the propoſition laid down, I proceed to ſome inferences.

1. We may hence learn how great their error is, who are for diſcarding all religious affections, as having nothing ſolid or ſubſtantial in them.

There ſeems to be too much of a diſpoſition this way, prevailing in this land at this time. Becauſe many who, in the late extraordinary ſeaſon, appeared to have great religious affections, did not manifeſt a right temper of mind, and run into many errors, in the time of their affection, and the heat of their zeal; and becauſe the high affections of many ſeem to be ſo ſoon come to nothing, and ſome who ſeemed to be mightily raiſed and ſwallowed with joy and zeal, for a while, ſeem to have returned like the dog to his vomit: hence religious affections in general are grown out of credit with great numbers, as though true religion did not at all conſiſt in them. Thus we eaſily and naturally run from one extreme to another. A little while ago we were in the other extreme; there was a prevalent diſpoſition to look upon all high religious affections as eminent exerciſes of true grace, without much inquiring into the nature and ſource of thoſe affections, and the manner in which they aroſe: if perſons did but appear to be indeed very much moved and raiſed, ſo as to be full of religious talk, and expreſs themſelves with great warmth and earneſtneſs, and to

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be *filled*, or to be *very full*, as the phraſes were; it was too much the manner, without further examination, to conclude ſuch perſons were full of the Spirit of God, and had eminent experience of his gracious influences. This was the extreme which was prevailing three or four years ago. But of late, inſtead of *eſteeming* and *admiring* all religious *affections*, *without diſtinction*, it is a thing much more prevalent, to *reject* and *diſcard* all *without diſtinction*. Herein appears the ſubtility of Satan. While he ſaw that *affections* were much in vogue, knowing the greater part of the land were not verſed in ſuch things, and had not had much experience of great *religious affections*, to enable them to judge well of them, and diſtinguiſh between true and falſe; then he knew he could beſt play his game, by ſowing tares amongſt the wheat, and mingling *falſe affections* with the works of God's Spirit: he knew this to be a likely way to delude and eternally ruin many ſouls, and greatly to wound religion in the ſaints, and entangle them in a dreadful wilderneſs, and by and by, to bring all religion into diſrepute. But now, when the ill conſequences of theſe *falſe affections* appear, and it is become very apparent, that ſome of thoſe emotions which made a glaring ſhew, and were by many greatly admired, were in reality nothing; the devil ſees it to be for his intereſt to go another way to work, and to endeavor to his utmoſt to propagate and eſtabliſh a perſuaſion, that all affections and ſenſible emotions of the mind, in things of religion, are nothing at all to be regarded, but are rather to be avoided, and carefully guarded againſt, as things of a pernicious tendency. This he knows is the way to bring all religion to a mere lifeleſs formality, and effectually ſhut out the power of godlineſs, and every thing which is ſpiritual, and to have all true Chriſtianity turned out of doors. For although to true religion, there muſt indeed be ſomething elſe beſides affection; yet true religion conſiſts ſo much in the affections, that there can be no true religion without them. He who has no religious affection, is in a ſtate of ſpiritual death, and is wholly deſtitute of the powerful, quickening, ſaving influences of the Spirit of God upon his heart. As there is no true religion where there is nothing elſe but affection, ſo there is no true religion where there is no *religious affection*. As on the one hand, there muſt be light in the underſtanding, as well as an *affected* fervent heart; where there is heat without light, there can be nothing divine or heavenly in that heart: ſo on the other hand, where there is a kind

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of light without heat, a head ſtored with notions and ſpeculations, with a cold and unaffected heart, there can be nothing divine in that light, that knowlege is no true ſpiritual knowlege of divine things. If the great things of religion are rightly underſtood, they will affect the heart. The reaſon why men are not affected by ſuch infinitely great, important, glorious, and wonderful things, as they often hear and read of, in the word of God, is undoubtedly becauſe they are blind; if they were not ſo, it would be impoſſible, and utterly inconſiſtent with human nature, that their hearts ſhould be otherwiſe, than ſtrongly impreſſed, and greatly moved by ſuch things.

This manner of ſlighting all religious *affections*, is the way exceedingly to harden the hearts of men, and to encourage them in their ſtupidity and ſenſeleſſneſs, and to keep them in a ſtate of ſpiritual death as long as they live, and bring them at laſt to death eternal. The prevailing prejudice againſt *religious affections* at this day, in the land, is apparently of awful effect, to harden the hearts of ſinners, and damp the graces of many of the ſaints, and ſtund the life and power of religion, and preclude the effect of ordinances, and hold us down in a ſtate of dulneſs and apathy, and undoubtedly cauſes many perſons greatly to offend God, in entertaining mean and low thoughts of the extraordinary work he has lately wrought in this land.

And for perſons to deſpiſe and cry down all religious *affections*, is the way to ſhut all religion out of their own hearts, and to make thorough work in ruining their ſouls.

They who condemn high affections in others, are certainly not likely to have high affections themſelves. And let it be conſidered, that they who have but little religious affection, have certainly but little religion. And they who condemn others for their *religious affections*, and have none themſelves, have no religion.

There are falſe *affections*, and there are true. A man's having *much affection*, does not prove that he has any true religion: but if he has *no affection*, it proves that he has no true religion. The right way, is not to reject all affections, nor to approve all; but to diſtinguiſh between affections, approving ſome, and rejecting others; ſeparating between the wheat and the chaff, the gold and the droſs, the precious and the vile.

2. If it be ſo, that true religion lies much in the *affections*, hence we may infer, that ſuch means are to be deſired, as have much

much of a tendency to move the affections. Such books, and ſuch a way of preaching the word, and adminiſtration of ordinances, and ſuch a way of worſhipping God in prayer, and ſinging praiſes, is much to be deſired, as has a tendency deeply to affect the hearts of thoſe who attend theſe means.

Such a kind of means would formerly have been highly approved of, and applauded by the generality of the people of the land, as the moſt excellent and profitable, and having the greateſt tendency to promote the ends of the means of grace. But the prevailing taſte ſeems of late ſtrangely to be altered: that pathetical manner of praying and preaching, which would formerly have been admired and extolled, and that for this reaſon becauſe it had ſuch a tendency to move the affections, now, in great multitudes, immediately excites diſguſt, and moves no other affections, than thoſe of diſpleaſure and contempt.

Perhaps, formerly the generality (at leaſt of the common people) were in the extreme, of looking too much to an affectionate addreſs, in public performances: but now, a very great part of the people ſeem to have gone far into a contrary extreme. Indeed there may be ſuch means, as may have a great tendency to ſtir up the paſſions of weak and ignorant perſons, and yet have no great tendency to benefit their ſouls: for though they may have a tendency to excite affections, they may have little or none to excite gracious affections, or any affections tending to grace. But undoubtedly, if the things of religion, in the means uſed, are treated according to their nature, and exhibited truly, ſo as tends to convey juſt apprehenſions, and a right judgment of them; the more they have a tendency to move the affections, the better.

3. If true religion lies much in the affections, hence we may learn, what great cauſe we have to be aſhamed and confounded before God, that we are no more affected with the great things of religion. It appears from what has been ſaid, that this ariſes from our having ſo little true religion.

God has given to mankind affections, for the ſame purpoſe which he has given all the faculties and principles of the human ſoul for, *viz.* that they might be ſubſervient to man's chief end, and the great buſineſs for which God has created him, that is, the buſineſs of religion. And yet how common is it among mankind, that their affections are much more exerciſed and engaged in other matters, than in religion! In things

which

which concern mens worldly intereſt, their outward delights, their honour and reputation, and their natural relations, they have their deſires eager, their appetites vehement, their love warm and affectionate, their zeal ardent; in theſe things their hearts are tender and ſenſible, eaſily moved, deeply impreſſed, much concerned, very ſenſibly affected, and greatly engaged; much depreſſed with grief at worldly loſſes, and highly raiſed with joy at worldly ſucceſſes and proſperity. But how inſenſible and unmoved are moſt men, about the great things of another world! how dull are their affections! how heavy and hard their hearts in theſe matters! here their love is cold, their deſires languid, their zeal low, and their gratitude ſmall. How they can ſit and hear of the infinite height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus, of his giving his infinitely dear Son, to be offered up a ſacrifice for the ſins of men, and of the unparallelled love of the innocent, holy and tender Lamb of God, manifeſted in his dying agonies, his bloody ſweat, his loud and bitter cries, and bleeding heart, and all this for enemies, to redeem them from deſerved, eternal burnings, and to bring to unſpeakable and everlaſting joy and glory; and yet be cold, and heavy, inſenſible, and regardleſs! Where are the exerciſes of our affections proper, if not here? what is it that does more require them? and what can be a fit occaſion of their lively and vigorous exerciſe, if not ſuch an one as this? can any thing be ſet in our view, greater and more important? any thing more wonderful and ſurpriſing? or more nearly concerning our intereſt? Can we ſuppoſe the wiſe Creator implanted ſuch principles in the human nature as the affections, to be of uſe to us, and to be exerciſed on certain proper occaſions, but to lie ſtill on ſuch an occaſion as this? can any Chriſtian, who believes the truth of theſe things, entertain ſuch thoughts?

If we ought ever to exerciſe our affections at all, and if the Creator has not unwiſely conſtituted the human nature, in making theſe principles a part of it, when they are vain and uſeleſs; then they ought to be exerciſed about thoſe objects which are moſt worthy of them. But is there any thing, which Chriſtians can find in heaven or earth, ſo worthy to be the objects of their admiration and love, their earneſt and longing deſires, their hope, and their rejoicing, and their fervent zeal, as thoſe things that are held forth to us in the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt? in which, not only are things declared moſt worthy to

affect

affect us, but they are exhibited in the moſt affecting manner. The glory and beauty of the bleſſed JEHOVAH, which is moſt worthy in itſelf, to be the object of our admiration and love, is there exhibited in the moſt affecting manner that can be conceived of, as it appears ſhining in all its luſtre, in the face of an incarnate, infinitely loving, meek, compaſſionate, dying Redeemer. All the virtues of the Lamb of God, his humility, patience, meekneſs, ſubmiſſion, obedience, love and compaſſion, are exhibited to our view, in a manner the moſt tending to move our affections, of any that can be imagined; as they all had their greateſt trial, and their higheſt exerciſe, and ſo their brighteſt manifeſtation, when he was in the moſt affecting circumſtances; even when he was under his laſt ſufferings, thoſe unutterable and unparallelled ſufferings, he endured, from his tender love and pity to us. There alſo, the hateful nature of our ſins is manifeſted in the moſt affecting manner poſſible; as we ſee the dreadful effects of them, in what our Redeemer, who undertook to anſwer for us, ſuffered for them. And there we have the moſt affecting manifeſtations of God's hatred of ſin, and his wrath and juſtice in puniſhing it; as we ſee his juſtice in the ſtrictneſs and inflexibleneſs of it, and his wrath in its terribleneſs, in ſo dreadfully puniſhing our ſins, in one who was infinitely dear to him, and loving to us. So has God diſpoſed things, in the affair of our redemption, and in his glorious diſpenſations, revealed to us in the goſpel, as though every thing were purpoſely contrived in ſuch a manner, as to have the greateſt poſſible tendency to reach our hearts in the moſt tender part, and move our affections moſt ſenſibly and ſtrongly. How great cauſe have we therefore to be humbled to the duſt, that we are no more affected!

PART

PART II.

Shewing what are no certain Signs that religious Affections are truly gracious, or that they are not.

IF any one, on the reading of what has been juſt now ſaid, is ready to acquit himſelf, and ſay, "I am not one of thoſe "who have no religious affections; I am often greatly moved "with the conſideration of the great things of religion;" let him not content himſelf with this, that he has religious affections: for, as was obſerved before, as we ought not to reject and condemn all affections, as though true religion did not at all conſiſt in affection; ſo, on the other hand, we ought not to approve of all, as though every one that was religiouſly affected had true grace, and was therein the ſubject of the ſaving influences of the Spirit of God: and that therefore the right way is to diſtinguiſh among religious affections, between one ſort and another. Therefore let us now endeavour to do this: and in order to it, I would do two things.

I. I would mention ſome things, which are no ſigns one way or the other, either that affections are ſuch as true religion conſiſts in, or that they are otherwiſe; that we may be guarded againſt judging of affections by falſe ſigns.

II. I would obſerve ſome things, wherein thoſe affections which are ſpiritual and gracious, differ from thoſe which are not ſo, and may be diſtinguiſhed and known.

FIRST, I would take notice of ſome things, which are no ſigns that affections are gracious, or that they are not.

I. It is no ſign one way or the other, that religious affections are very great, or raiſed very high.

Some are ready to condemn all high affections: if perſons appear to have their religious affections raiſed to an extraordi-

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nary pitch, they are prejudiced againſt them, and determine that they are deluſions, without further inquiry. But if it be as has been proved, that true religion lies very much in religious affections, then it follows, that if there be a great deal of true religion, there will be great religious affections; if true religion in the hearts of men be raiſed to a great height, divine and holy affections will be raiſed to a great height.

Love is an affection; but will any Chriſtian ſay, men ought not to love God and Jeſus Chriſt in a high degree? and will any ſay, we ought not to have a very great hatred of ſin, and a very deep ſorrow for it? or that we ought not to exerciſe a high degree of gratitude to God, for the mercies we receive of him, and the great things he has done for the ſalvation of fallen men? or that we ſhould not have very great and ſtrong deſires after God and holineſs? Is there any who will profeſs, that his affections in religion are great enough; and will ſay, "I have "no cauſe to be humbled, that I am no more affected with the "things of religion than I am; I have no reaſon to be aſhamed, "that I have no greater exerciſes of love to God, and ſorrow "for ſin, and gratitude for the mercies which I have received?" Who is there that will go and bleſs God, that he is affected enough with what he has read and heard of the wonderful love of God to worms and rebels, in giving his only begotten Son to die for them, and of the dying love of Chriſt; and will pray that he may not be affected with them in any higher degree, becauſe high affections are improper, and very unlovely in Chriſtians, being enthuſiaſtical, and ruinous to true religion?

Our text plainly ſpeaks of great and high affections, when it ſpeaks of *rejoicing with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*: here the moſt ſuperlative expreſſions are uſed, which language will afford. And the ſcriptures often require us to exerciſe very high affections: thus in the firſt and great commandment of the law, there is an accumulation of expreſſions, as though words were wanting to expreſs the degree in which we ought to love God; *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, with all thy mind, and with all thy ſtrength.* So the ſaints are called upon to exerciſe high degrees of joy: "Rejoice, (ſays Chriſt to his diſciples,) and be exceeding glad," Matth. v. 12. So it is ſaid, Pſal. lxviii. 3. "Let the righteous be glad: "let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly "rejoice." So in the ſame book of Pſalms, the ſaints are often called upon to *ſhout for joy*; and in Luke vi. 23. to "leap

" for joy." So they are abundantly called upon to exercise high degrees of gratitude for mercies, to *praise God with all their hearts, with hearts lifted up in the ways of the Lord, and ther souls magnifying the Lord, singing his praises, talking of his wonderous works, declaring his doings*, &c.

And we find the most eminent saints in scripture often professing high affections. Thus the psalmist *speaks* of his love, as if it were *unspeakable*; Psal. cxix. 97. " O how love I thy " law!" so he expresses a great degree of hatred of sin; Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. " Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate " thee? and am not I grieved with them that rise up against " thee? I hate them with perfect hatred." He also expresses a high degree of sorrow for sin: he speaks of his sins *going over his head, as an heavy burden, that was too heavy for him*; and of *his roaring all the day*, and *his moisture's being turned into the drought of summer*, and *his bones being* as it were *broken* with sorrow. So he often expresses great degrees of spiritual desires, in a multitude of the strongest expressions which can be conceived of; such as *his longing, his soul's thirsting as a dry and thirsty land where no water is, his panting, his flesh and heart crying out, his soul's breaking for the longing it hath*, &c. He expresses the exercises of great and extreme grief for the sins of others, Psal. cxix. 136. " Rivers of water run " down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." And vers. 53. " Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked " that forsake thy law." He expresses high exercises of joy, Psal. xxi. 1. " The king shall joy in thy strength, and in thy " salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!" Psal. lxxi. 23. " My " lips shall greatly rejoice, when I sing unto thee." Psal. lxiii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. " Because thy loving kindness is better than life: " my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee, while I live: " I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satis- " fied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise " thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, " and meditate on thee in the night-watches. Because thou " hast been my help; therefore in the shadow of thy wings " will I rejoice."

The apostle Paul expresses high exercises of affection. Thus he expresses the exercises of pity and concern for others good, even to *anguish of heart*; a *great, fervent* and *abundant love*, and *earnest* and *longing desires*, and *exceeding joy*; and speaks of the *exultation* and *triumphs* of his soul, and his *earnest*

expectation

expectation and *hope*, and his *abundant tears*, and the *travails of his ſoul*, in pity, grief, earneſt deſires, godly jealouſy, and fervent zeal, in many places that have been cited already, and which therefore I need not repeat. John the Baptiſt expreſſed "great joy," John iii. 39. Thoſe bleſſed women that anointed the body of Jeſus, are repreſented as in a very high exerciſe of religious affection, on occaſion of Chriſt's reſurrection; Matth. xxviii. 8. "And they departed from the ſepulchre, with "fear and great joy."

It is often foretold of the church of God, in her future happy ſeaſons here on earth, that they ſhall exceedingly rejoice; Pſal. lxxxix. 15, 16. "They ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of "thy countenance. In thy name ſhall they rejoice all the day; "and in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted." Zech. ix. 9. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; ſhout, O daughter "of Jeruſalem: behold, thy King cometh, &c." The ſame is repreſented in innumerable other places. And becauſe high degrees of joy are the proper and genuine fruits of the goſpel of Chriſt, therefore the angel calls this goſpel, *good tidings of great joy, that ſhould be to all people.*

The ſaints and angels in heaven, that have religion in its higheſt perfection, are exceedingly affected with what they behold and contemplate of God's perfections and works. They are all as a pure heavenly flame of fire, in their love, and in the greatneſs and ſtrength of their joy and gratitude: their praiſes are repreſented, *as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder.* Now the only reaſon why their affections are ſo much higher than the holy affections of ſaints on earth, is, they ſee the things they are affected by, more according to their truth, and have their affections more conformed to the nature of things. And therefore, if religious affections in men here below, are but of the ſame nature and kind with theirs, the higher they are, and the nearer they are to theirs in degree, the better; becauſe therein they will be ſo much the more conformed to truth, as theirs are.

From theſe things it certainly appears, that religious affections being in a very high degree, is no evidence that they are not ſuch as have the nature of true religion. Therefore they do greatly err, who condemn perſons as enthuſiaſts, merely becauſe their affections are very high.

And on the other hand, it is no evidence that religious affections are of a ſpiritual and gracious nature, becauſe they are great.

It is very manifeſt by the holy ſcripture, our ſure and infallible rule to judge of things of this nature, that there are religious affections which are very high, that are not ſpiritual and ſaving. The apoſtle Paul ſpeaks of affections in the Galatians, which had been exceedingly elevated, and which yet he manifeſtly ſpeaks of, as fearing that they were vain, and had come to nothing, Gal. iv. 15. "Where is the bleſſedneſs you "ſpake of? for I bear you record, that if it had been poſſi- "ble, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have "given them to me." And in the 11th verſe he tells them, "he was afraid of them, leſt he had beſtowed upon them la- "bour in vain," So the children of Iſrael were greatly affected with God's mercy to them, when they had ſeen how wonderfully he wrought for them at the Red ſea, where they *ſang God's praiſe*; though they ſoon forgat his works. So they were greatly affected again, at mount Sinai, when they ſaw the marvellous manifeſtations God made of himſelf there; and ſeemed mightily engaged in their minds, and with great forwardneſs made anſwer, when God propoſed his holy covenant to them, ſaying, *All that the Lord hath ſpoken will we do, and be obedient.* But how ſoon was there an end to all this mighty forwardneſs and engagedneſs of affection? how quickly were they turned aſide after other Gods, rejoicing and ſhouting around their golden calf? So great multitudes who were affected with the miracle of raiſing Lazarus from the dead, were elevated to a high degree, and made a mighty ado, when Jeſus preſently after entered into Jeruſalem, exceedingly magnifying Chriſt, as though the ground were not good enough for the aſs he rode to tread upon; and therefore cut down branches of palm-trees, and ſtrawed them in the way; yea, pulled off their garments, and ſpread them in the way; and cried with loud voices, *Hoſanna to the ſon of David, bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, hoſannah in the higheſt*; ſo as to make the whole city ring again, and put all into an uproar. We learn by the evangeliſt John, that the reaſon why the people made this ado, was becauſe they were affected with the miracle of raiſing Lazarus, John xii. 18. Here was a vaſt multitude crying *Hoſanna* on this occaſion, ſo that it gave occaſion to the Phariſees to ſay, "Behold, the world is gone after him," John xii. 19; but Chriſt had at that time but few true diſciples. And how quickly was this ado at an end? all of this nature is quelled and dead, when this Jeſus ſtands bound, with

a mock robe and a crown of thorns, to be derided, ſpit upon, ſcourged, condemned, and executed. Indeed there was a great and loud outcry concerning him, among the multitude then, as well as before; but of a very different kind: it is not then, *Hoſanna, hoſanna*, but *Crucify, crucify*.

And it is the concurring voice of all orthodox divines, that there may be religious affections, which are raiſed to a very high degree, and yet there be nothing of true religion.*

II. It is no ſign that affections have the nature of true religion, or that they have not, that they have great effects on the body.

All affections whatſoever, have in ſome reſpect or degree, an effect on the body. As was obſerved before, ſuch is our nature, and ſuch are the laws of union of ſoul and body, that the mind can have no lively or vigorous exerciſe, without ſome effect upon the body. So ſubject is the body to the mind, and ſo much do its fluids, eſpecially the animal ſpirits, attend the motions and exerciſes of the mind, that there cannot be ſo much as an intenſe thought, without an effect upon them. Yea it is queſtionable, whether an imbodied ſoul ever ſo much as thinks one thought, or has any exerciſe at all, but that there is ſome correſponding motion or alteration of motion, in ſome degree, of the fluids, in ſome part of the body. But univerſal experience ſhews, that the exerciſe of the affections have in a ſpecial manner a tendency to ſome ſenſible effect upon the body. And if this be ſo, that all affections have ſome effect on the body, we may then well ſuppoſe, the greater thoſe affections be, and the more vigorous their exerciſe, (other circumſtances being equal) the greater will be the effect on the body. Hence it is not to be wondered at, that very *great* and ſtrong exerciſes of the affections ſhould have *great* effects on the body. And therefore, ſeeing there are very great affections, both common and ſpiritual; hence it is not to be wondered at, that great effects on the body ſhould ariſe from both theſe kinds of affections. And conſequently theſe effects are no ſigns, that the affections they ariſe from, are of one kind or the other.

Great effects on the body certainly are no ſure evidences that affections are ſpiritual; for we ſee that ſuch effects oftentimes ariſe from great affections about temporal things, and when religion is no way concerned in them. And if great affections

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* Mr. Stoddard obſerves, "That common affections are ſometimes ſtronger than ſaving." *Guide to Chriſt*, P. 21.

about ſecular things, that are purely natural, may have theſe effects, I know not by what rule we ſhould determine, that high affections about religious things, which ariſe in like manner from nature, cannot have the like effect.

Nor on the other hand, do I know of any rule any have to determine, that gracious and holy affections, when raiſed as high as any natural affections, and have equally ſtrong and vigorous exerciſes, cannot have a great effect on the body. No ſuch rule can be drawn from reaſon: I know of no reaſon, why a being affected with a view of God's glory ſhould not cauſe the body to faint, as well as being affected with a view of Solomon's glory. And no ſuch rule has as yet been produced from the ſcripture: none has ever been found in all the late controverſies which have been about things of this nature. There is a great power in ſpiritual affections: we read of the power which worketh in Chriſtians,* and of the Spirit of God being in them, as the Spirit of power,† and of the effectual working of his power in them,‡ yea, of the working of God's mighty power in them.‖ But man's nature is weak: fleſh and blood are repreſented in ſcripture as exceeding weak; and particularly with reſpect to its unfitneſs for great ſpiritual and heavenly operations and exerciſes, Matthew xxvi. 41. 1 Cor. xv. 43. and 50. The text we are upon ſpeaks of *joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*. And who that conſiders what man's nature is, and what the nature of the affections are, can reaſonably doubt but that ſuch unutterable and glorious joys, may be too great and mighty for weak duſt and aſhes, ſo as to be conſiderably overbearing to it? It is evident by the ſcripture, that true divine diſcoveries, or ideas of God's glory, when given in a great degree, have a tendency, by affecting the mind, to overbear the body; becauſe the ſcripture teaches us often, that if theſe ideas or views ſhould be given to ſuch a degree, as they are given in heaven, the weak frame of the body could not ſubſiſt under it, and that no man can, in that manner, ſee God and live. The knowlege which the ſaints have of God's beauty and glory in this world, and thoſe holy affections that ariſe from it, are of the ſame nature and kind with what the ſaints are the ſubjects of in heaven, differing only in degree and circumſtances: what God gives them here, is a foretaſte of heavenly happineſs, and an earneſt of their future inheritance. And who ſhall limit God in his giving this earneſt, or ſay he ſhall give ſo much of the inheritance, ſuch a part of the future reward,

* Eph. iii. 7. † 2 Tim. i. 7. ‡ Eph. iii. 7. 20. ‖ Eph. i. 19.

reward, as an earneſt of the whole, and no more? And ſeeing God has taught us in his word, that the whole reward is ſuch, that it would at once deſtroy the body, is it not too bold a thing for us, ſo to ſet bounds to the ſovereign God, as to ſay, that in giving the earneſt of this reward in this world, he ſhall never give ſo much of it, as in the leaſt to diminiſh the ſtrength of the body, when God has no where thus limited himſelf?

The pſalmiſt ſpeaking of vehement religious affections he had, ſpeaks of an effect in his fleſh or body, beſides what was in his ſoul, expreſly diſtinguiſhing one from the other, once and again, Pſal. lxxxiv. 2. "My ſoul longeth, yea, even fainteth "for the courts of the Lord: my *heart* and my *fleſh* crieth out "for the living God." Here is a plain diſtinction between the heart and the fleſh, as being each affected. So Pſal. lxiii. 1. "My *ſoul* thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee in a dry "and thirſty land, where no water is." Here alſo is an evident deſigned diſtinction between the ſoul and the fleſh.

The prophet Habakkuk ſpeaks of his body's being overborn, by a ſenſe of the majeſty of God, Hab. iii. 16. "When I "heard, my belly trembled: my lips quivered at the voice: "rottenneſs entered into my bones, and I trembled in myſelf." So the pſalmiſt ſpeaks expreſly of his fleſh trembling, Pſal. cxix. 120. "My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee."

That ſuch ideas of God's glory, as are ſometimes given in this world, have a tendency to overbear the body, is evident, becauſe the ſcripture gives us an account, that this has ſometimes actually been the effect of thoſe external manifeſtations God has made of himſelf, to ſome of the ſaints, which were made to that end, *viz.* to give them an idea of God's majeſty and glory. Such inſtances we have in the prophet Daniel, and the apoſtle John. Daniel giving an account of an external repreſentation of the glory of Chriſt, ſays, Dan. x. 8. "And there "remained no ſtrength in me; for my comelineſs was turned "into corruption, and I retained no ſtrength." And the apoſtle John giving an account of a like manifeſtation made to him, ſays, Rev. i. 17. "And when I ſaw him, I fell at his feet as "dead." It is in vain to ſay here, theſe were only external manifeſtations or ſymbols of the glory of Chriſt, which theſe ſaints beheld: for though it be true, that they were outward repreſentations of Chriſt's glory, which they beheld with their bodily eyes; yet the end and uſe of theſe external ſymbols or repreſentations, was to give to theſe prophets an idea of the

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thing repreſented, and that was the true divine glory and majeſty of Chriſt, which is his ſpiritual glory; they were made uſe of only as ſignifications of this ſpiritual glory, and thus undoubtedly they received them, and improved them, and were affected by them. According to the end for which God intended theſe outward ſigns, they received by them a great and lively apprehenſion of the real glory and majeſty of God's nature, which they were ſigns of; and thus were greatly affected, their ſouls ſwallowed up, and their bodies overborn. And I think, they are very bold and daring, who will ſay God cannot, or ſhall not give the like clear and affecting ideas and apprehenſions of the ſame real glory and majeſty of his nature, to none of his ſaints, without the intervention of any ſuch external ſhadows of it.

Before I leave this head, I would farther obſerve, that it is plain the ſcripture often makes uſe of bodily effects, to expreſs the ſtrength of holy and ſpiritual affections; ſuch as *trembling*, * *groaning*, † *being ſick*, ‖ *crying out*, ‡ *panting*, § and *fainting*. ** Now if it be ſuppoſed, that theſe are only figurative expreſſions, to repreſent the degree of affection; yet I hope all will allow, that they are fit and ſuitable figures to repreſent the high degree of thoſe ſpiritual affections, which the Spirit of God makes uſe of them to repreſent: which I do not ſee how they would be, if thoſe ſpiritual affections, let them be in never ſo high a degree, have no tendency to any ſuch things; but that on the contrary, they are the proper effects, and ſad tokens of falſe affections, and the deluſion of the devil, I cannot think, God would commonly make uſe of things which are very alien from ſpiritual affections, and are ſhrewd marks of the hand of Satan, and ſmell ſtrong of the bottomleſs pit, as beautiful figures, repreſent the high degree of holy and heavenly affections.

III. It is no ſign that affections are truly gracious affections, or that they are not, that they cauſe thoſe who have them, to be fluent, fervent and abundant, in talking of the things of religion.

There

* Pſal. cxix. 120. Ezra ix. 4. Iſ. lxvi. 2, 5. Hab. iii. 16. † Rom. viii. 26. ‖ Cant. ii. 5. and v. 8. ‡ Pſal. lxxxiv. 2. § Pſal. xxxviii. 10. and xlii. 1. and cxix. 131. ** Pſal. lxxxiv. 2. and cxix. 81.

There are many perſons, who if they ſee this in others, are greatly prejudiced againſt them. Their being ſo full of talk, is with them, a ſufficient ground to condemn them, as Phariſees, and oſtentatious hypocrites. On the other hand, there are many, who if they ſee this effect in any, are very ignorantly and imprudently forward, at once to determine that they are the true children of God, and are under the ſaving influences of his Spirit, and ſpeak of it as a great evidence of a new creature: they ſay, *ſuch an one's mouth is now opened: he uſed to be ſlow to ſpeak; but now he is full and free: he is free now to open his heart, and tell his experiences, and declare the praiſes of God; it comes from him, as free as water from a fountain*; and the like. And eſpecially are they captivated into a confident and undoubting perſuaſion that they are ſavingly wrought upon, if they are not only free and abundant, but very affectionate and earneſt in their talk.

But this is the fruit of but little judgment, a ſcanty and ſhort experience; as events do abundantly ſhew: and is a miſtake perſons often run into, through their truſting to their own wiſdom and diſcerning, and making their own notions their rule, inſtead of the holy ſcripture. Though the ſcripture be full of rules, both how we ſhould judge of our own ſtate, and alſo how we ſhould be conducted in our opinion of others; yet we have no where any rule, by which to judge ourſelves or others to be in a good eſtate, from any ſuch effect: for this is but the religion of the mouth and of the tongue, and what is in the ſcripture repreſented by the leaves of a tree, which though the tree ought not to be without them, yet are no where given as an evidence of the goodneſs of the tree.

That perſons are diſpoſed to be abundant in talking of things of religion, may be from a good cauſe, and it may be from a bad one. It may be becauſe their hearts are very full of holy affections; for *out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh*: and it may be becauſe perſons hearts are very full of religious affection which is not holy; for ſtill out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh. It is very much the nature of the affections, of whatever kind they be, and whatever objects they are exerciſed about, if they are ſtrong, to diſpoſe perſons to be very much in ſpeaking of that which they are affected with; and not only to ſpeak much, but to ſpeak very earn-

eſtly and fervently. And therefore perſons talking abundantly and very fervently about the things of religion, can be an evidence of no more than this, that they are very much affected with the things of religion; but this may be, (as has been already ſhown,) and there be no grace. That which men are greatly affected with, while the high affection laſts, they will be earneſtly engaged about, and will be likely to ſhew that earneſtneſs in their talk and behaviour; as the greater part of the Jews, in all Judah and Galilee, did for a while, about John the Baptiſt's preaching and baptiſm, when they were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoice in his light: a mighty ado was made, all over the land, and among all ſorts of perſons, about this great prophet and his miniſtry. And ſo the multitude in like manner, often manifeſted a great earneſtneſs, a mighty engagedneſs of ſpirit, in every thing that was external, about Chriſt and his preaching and miracles, *being aſtoniſhed at his doctrine, anon with joy receiving the word*, following him, ſometimes night and day, leaving meat, drink, and ſleep to hear him; once following him into the wilderneſs, faſting three days going, to hear him; ſometimes crying him up to the clouds, ſaying, *Never man ſpake like this man!* being fervent and earneſt in what they ſaid. But what did theſe things come to, in the greater part of them?

A perſon may be over-full of talk of his own experiences; commonly falling upon it, every where, and in all companies; and when it is ſo, it is rather a dark ſign than a good one. As a tree that is over-full of leaves, ſeldom bears much fruit: and as a cloud, though to appearance very pregnant and full of water, if it brings with it over-much wind, ſeldom affords much rain to the dry and thirſty earth: which very thing the Holy Spirit is pleaſed ſeveral times to make uſe of, to repreſent a great ſhew of religion with the mouth, without anſwerable fruit in the life, Prov. xxv. 14. "Whoſo boaſteth himſelf of a falſe "gift, is like clouds and wind without rain." And the apoſtle Jude, ſpeaking of ſome in the primitive times, that *crept in unawares* among the ſaints, and having a great ſhew of religion, were for a while not ſuſpected, *Theſe are clouds* (ſays he) *without water, carried about of winds*; Jude verſ. 4. and 12. And the apoſtle Peter, ſpeaking of the ſame, ſays, 2 Pet. ii. 17. "Theſe are clouds without water, carried with a tempeſt."

Falſe

False affections, if they are equally strong, are much more forward to declare themselves, than true: because it is the nature of false religion, to affect shew and observation; as it was with the Pharisees. †

IV. It is no sign that affections are gracious, or that they are otherwise, that persons did not make them themselves, or excite them of their own contrivance, and by their own strength.

There are many in these days, that condemn all affections which are excited in a way that the subjects of them can give no account of, as not seeming to be the fruit of any of their own endeavours, or the natural consequence of the faculties and principles of human nature, in such circumstances, and under such means; but to be from the influence of some extrinsic and supernatural power upon their minds. How greatly has the doctrine of the inward experience or sensible perceiving of the immediate power and operation of the Spirit of God, been reproached and ridiculed by many of late? They say, the manner of the Spirit of God, is to co-operate in a silent, secret and undiscernible way with the use of means, and our own endeavours;

† That famous experimental divine Mr. Shepard, says, "A Pharisee's trumpet shall be heard to the town's end; when simplicity "walks through the town unseen. Hence a man will sometimes co- "vertly commend himself, (and *myself* ever comes in,) and tells you "a long story of conversion: and an hundred to one if some lie or "other slip not out with it. Why, the secret meaning is, *I pray* "*admire me.* Hence complain of wants and weaknesses; *pray think* "*what a broken-hearted Christian I am.*" *Parab. of the ten virgins*, Part I. page 179, 180.

And holy Mr. Flavel says thus, "O reader, if thy heart were "right with God, and thou didst not cheat thyself with a vain pro- "fession, thou wouldst have frequent business with God, which thou "wouldst be loth thy dearest friend, or the wife of thy bosom should "be privy to. *Non est religio, ubi omnia patent.* Religion doth not "lie open to all, to the eyes of men. Observed duties maintain our "credit; but secret duties maintain our life. It was the saying of an "heathen, about his secret correspondency with his friend, *What need* "*the world be acquainted with it? Thou and I are theatre enough to* "*each other.* There are inclosed pleasures in religion, which none "but renewed spiritual souls do feelingly understand." *Flavel's Touchstone of sincerity*, Chap. II. sect. 2.

vours; ſo that there is no diſtinguiſhing by ſenſe, between the influences of the Spirit of God, and the natural operations of the faculties of our own minds.

And it is true, that for any to expect to receive the ſaving influences of the Spirit of God, while they neglect a diligent improvement of the appointed means of grace, is unreaſonable preſumption. And to expect that the Spirit of God will ſavingly operate upon their minds, without the Spirit's making uſe of means, as ſubſervient to the effect, is enthuſiaſtical. It is alſo undoubtedly true, that the ſpirit of God is very various in the manner and circumſtances of his operations, and that ſometimes he operates in a way more ſecret and gradual, and from ſmaller beginnings, than at others.

But if there be indeed a power, entirely different from and beyond our power, or the power of all means and inſtruments, and above the power of nature, which is requiſite in order to the production of ſaving grace in the heart, according to the general profeſſion of the country; then certainly, it is in no wiſe unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that this effect ſhould very frequently be produced after ſuch a manner, as to make it very manifeſt, apparent, and ſenſible that it is ſo. If grace be indeed owing to the powerful and efficatious operation of an extrinſic agent, or divine efficient out of ourſelves, why is it unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, it ſhould ſeem to be ſo, to them who are the ſubjects of it? Is it a ſtrange thing that it ſhould ſeem to be as it is? When grace in the heart indeed is not produced by our ſtrength, nor is the effect of the natural power of our own faculties, or any means or inſtruments, but is properly the workmanſhip and production of the Spirit of the Almighty, is it a ſtrange and unaccountable thing, that it ſhould ſeem to them who are ſubjects of it, agreeable to truth, and not right contrary to truth; ſo that if perſons tell of effects that they are conſcious to in their own minds, that ſeem to them not to be from the natural power or operation of their minds, but from the ſupernatural power of ſome other agent, it ſhould at once be looked upon as a ſure evidence of their being under a deluſion, becauſe things ſeem to them to be as they are? For this is the objection which is made: it is looked upon as a clear evidence, that the apprehenſions and affections that many perſons have, are not really from ſuch a cauſe, becauſe they ſeem to them to be from that cauſe: they declare that what they are conſcious of, ſeems to them evidently not to be from themſelves but from the mighty power of the ſpirit of God: and others from hence

condemn

condemn them, and determine what they experience is not from the ſpirit of God, but from themſelves, or from the devil. Thus unreaſonably are multitudes treated at this day, by their neighbours.

If it be indeed ſo, as the ſcripture abundantly teaches, that grace in the ſoul, is ſo the effect of God's power, that it is fitly compared to thoſe effects, which are fartheſt from being owing to any ſtrength in the ſubject, ſuch as a *generation*, or *a being begotten*, and *reſurrection* or *a being raiſed from the dead*, and *creation*, or *a being brought out of nothing into being*, and that it is an effect wherein the mighty power of God is greatly glorified, and the exceeding greatneſs of his power is manifeſted;* then what account can be given of it, that the Almighty, in ſo great a work of his power, ſhould ſo carefully hide his power, that the ſubjects of it ſhould be able to diſcern nothing of it? or what reaſon or revelation have any to determine that he does ſo? If we may judge by the ſcripture, this is not agreeable to God's manner, in his operations and diſpenſations; but on the contrary, it is God's manner, in the great works of his power and mercy which he works for his people, to order things ſo, as to make his hand viſible, and his power conſpicuous, and mens dependence on him moſt evident, that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence,† that God alone might be exalted,‡ and that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of man,‖ and that Chriſt's power might be manifeſted in our weakneſs,§ and none might ſay, mine own hand hath ſaved me.** So it was in moſt of thoſe temporal ſalvations which God wrought for Iſrael of old, which were types of the ſalvation of God's people from their ſpiritual enemies. So it was in the redemption of Iſrael from their Egyptian bondage; he redeemed them with a ſtrong hand, and an outſtretched arm; and that his power might be the more conſpicuous, he ſuffered Iſrael firſt to be brought into the moſt helpleſs and forlorn circumſtances. So it was in the great redemption of Gideon; God would have his army diminiſhed to a handful, and they without any other arms, than trumpets, and lamps, and earthen pitchers. So it was in the deliverance of Iſrael from Goliath, by a ſtripling, with a ſling and a ſtone. So it was in that great work of God, his calling the Gentiles, and converting the Heathen world, after Chriſt's aſcenſion, after that the world by wiſdom

* Eph. i. 17—20. † 1 Cor. i. 27, 28, 29. ‡ Iſ. ii. 11.—17.
‖ 2 Cor. iv. 7. § 2 Cor. xii. 9. ** Judg. vii. 2.

wiſdom knew not God, and all the endeavours of philoſophers had proved in vain, for many ages, to reform the world, and it was by every thing become abundantly evident, that the world was utterly helpleſs, by any thing elſe but the mighty power of God. And ſo it was in moſt of the converſions of particular perſons, we have an account of in the hiſtory of the New-Teſtament: they were not wrought on in that ſilent ſecret, gradual, and inſenſible manner, which is now inſiſted on; but with thoſe manifeſt evidences of a ſupernatural power, wonderfully and ſuddenly cauſing a great change, which in theſe days are looked upon as certain ſigns of deluſion and enthuſiaſm.

The apoſtle in Eph. i. 18, 19. ſpeaks of God's enlightening the minds of Chriſtians, and ſo bringing them to believe in Chriſt, to the end that they *might know* the exceeding greatneſs of his power to them who believe. The words are, *The eyes of your underſtanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints, and what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power*, &c. Now when the apoſtle ſpeaks of their being thus the ſubjects of his power, in their enlightening and effectual calling, to the end that they might know what his mighty power was to them who believe, he can mean nothing elſe, than *that they might know by experience.* But if the ſaints know this power by experience, than they feel it, and diſcern it, and are conſcious of it; as ſenſibly diſtinguiſhable from the natural operations of their own minds, which is not agreeable to a notion of God's operating ſo ſecretly, and undiſcernibly that it cannot be known that they are the ſubjects of the influence of any extrinſic power at all, any otherwiſe than as they may argue it from ſcripture aſſertions; which is a different thing from knowing it by experience.

So that it is very unreaſonable and unſcriptural, to determine that affections are not from the gracious operations of God's Spirit, becauſe they are ſenſibly not from the perſons themſelves that are the ſubjects of them.

On the other hand, it is no evidence that affections are gracious, that they are not purpoſely produced by thoſe who are the ſubjects of them, or that they ariſe in their minds in a manner they cannot account for.

There

There are ſome who make this an argument in their own favour, when ſpeaking of what they have experienced, they ſay, "I am ſure I did not make it myſelf: it was a fruit of no contrivance or endeavour of mine; it came when I thought nothing of it; if I might have the world for it, I cannot make it again when I pleaſe." And hence they determine, that what they have experienced, muſt be from the mighty influence of the Spirit of God, and is of a ſaving nature; but very ignorantly, and without grounds. What they have been the ſubjects of, may indeed not be from themſelves directly, but may be from the operation of an inviſible agent, ſome ſpirit beſides their own: but it does not thence follow, that it was from the Spirit of God. There are other ſpirits who have influence on the minds of men, beſides the Holy Ghoſt. We are directed not to believe every ſpirit, but to try the ſpirits whether they be of God. There are many falſe ſpirits, exceeding buſy with men, who often transform themſelves into angels of light, and do in many wonderful ways, with great ſubtility and power, mimic the operations of the Spirit of God. And there are many of Satan's operations, which are very diſtinguiſhable from the voluntary exerciſes of mens own minds. They are ſo, in thoſe dreadful and horrid ſuggeſtions, and blaſphemous injections with which he follows many perſons; and in vain and fruitleſs frights and terrors, which he is the author of. And the power of Satan may be as immediate, and as evident in falſe comforts and joys, as in terrors and horrid ſuggeſtions; and oftentimes is ſo in fact. It is not in mens power to put themſelves into ſuch raptures, as the Anabaptiſts in Germany, and many other raving Enthuſiaſts like them, have been the ſubjects of.

And beſides, it is to be conſidered, that perſons may have thoſe impreſſions on their minds, which may not be of their own producing, nor from an evil ſpirit, but from the Spirit of God, and yet not be from any ſaving, but a common influence of the Spirit of God: and the ſubjects of ſuch impreſſions, may be of the number of thoſe we read of, Heb. vi. 4, 5. "that are once enlightened, and taſte of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and taſte the good word of God, and the power of the world to come;" and yet may be wholly unacquainted with thoſe *better things that accompany ſalvation*, ſpoken of verſ. 9.

And

And where neither a good nor evil ſpirit have any immed
ate hand, perſons, eſpecially ſuch as are of a weak and vapour
habit of body, and the brain weak, and eaſily ſuſceptive of im
preſſions, may have ſtrange apprehenſions and imagination
and ſtrong affections attending them, unaccountably ariſing
which are not voluntarily produced by themſelves. We ſe
that ſuch perſons are liable to ſuch impreſſions, about tempora
things ; and there is equal reaſon, why they ſhould about ſpiri
tual things. As a perſon who is aſleep, has dreams, that he i
not the voluntary author of ; ſo may ſuch perſons, in like man
ner, be the ſubjects of involuntary impreſſions, when they ar
awake.

V. It is no ſign that religious affections are truly holy an
ſpiritual, or that they are not, that they come with texts o
ſcripture, remarkably brought to the mind.

It is no ſign that affections are not gracious, that they ar
occaſioned by ſcriptures ſo coming to mind ; provided it be th
ſcripture itſelf, or the truth which the ſcripture ſo brough
contains and teaches, that is the foundation of the affection
and not merely or mainly, the ſudden and unuſual manner o
its coming to the mind.

But on the other hand, neither is it any ſign that affection
are gracious, that they ariſe on occaſion of ſcriptures brough
ſuddenly and wonderfully to the mind ; whether thoſe affection
be fear or hope, joy or ſorrow, or any other. Some ſeem t
look upon this, as a good evidence that their affections are ſav
ing, eſpecially if the affections excited are hope or joy, or an
other which are pleaſing and delightful. They will mention
it as an evidence that all is right, that their experience *cam*
with the word, and will ſay, "There were ſuch and ſuch ſwee
" promiſes brought to my mind : they came ſuddenly, as i
" they were ſpoke to me : I had no hand in bringing ſuch a
" text to my own mind ; I was not thinking of any thing lead
" ing to it ; it came all at once, ſo that I was ſurpriſed. I
" had not thought of it a long time before ; I did not know a
" firſt that it was ſcripture ; I did not remember that ever I
" had read it." And it may be, they will add, "One ſcrip
" ture came flowing in after another, and ſo texts all over the
" Bible, the moſt ſweet and pleaſant, and the moſt apt and
" ſuitable, which could be deviſed ; and filled me full as I could
" hold : I could not but ſtand and admire : the tears flowed ;
" I was full of joy, and could not doubt any longer." And

thus

thus they think they have undoubted evidence, that their affections muſt be from God, and of the right kind, and their ſtate good: but without any manner of grounds. How come they by any ſuch rule, as that if any affections or experiences ariſe with promiſes, and comfortable texts of ſcripture, unaccountably brought to mind, without their recollection, or if a great number of ſweet texts follow one another in a chain, that this is a certain evidence their experiences are ſaving? where is any ſuch rule to be found in the Bible, the great and only ſure directory in things of this nature?

What deceives many of the leſs underſtanding and conſiderate ſort of people, in this matter, ſeems to be this; that the ſcripture is the word of God, and has nothing in it which is wrong, but is pure and perfect: and therefore, thoſe experiences which come from the ſcripture muſt be right. But then it would be conſidered, affections may ariſe on *occaſion* of the ſcripture, and not properly come *from* the ſcripture, as the genuine fruit of the ſcripture, and by a right uſe of it; but from an abuſe of it. All that can be argued from the purity and perfection of the word of God, with reſpect to experiences, is this, that thoſe experiences which are *agreeable* to the word of God, are right, and cannot be otherwiſe; and not that thoſe affections muſt be right, which ariſe *on occaſion* of the word of God coming to the mind.

What evidence is there that the devil cannot bring texts of ſcripture to the mind, and miſapply them, to deceive perſons? There ſeems to be nothing in this which exceeds the power of Satan. It is no work of ſuch mighty power, to bring ſounds or letters to perſons minds, that we have any reaſon to ſuppoſe, nothing ſhort of omnipotence can be ſufficient for it. If Satan has power to bring any words or ſounds at all to perſons minds, he may have power to bring words contained in the Bible. There is no higher ſort of power required in men, to make the ſounds which expreſs the words of a text of ſcripture, than to make ſounds which expreſs the words of an idle ſtory or ſong. And ſo the ſame power in Satan, which is ſufficient to renew one of thoſe kinds of ſounds in the mind, is ſufficient to renew the other: the different ſignification, which depends wholly on cuſtom, alters not the caſe, as to ability to make or revive the ſounds or letters. Or will any ſuppoſe, that texts of ſcripture are ſuch ſacred things, that the devil durſt not abuſe them, nor touch them? In this alſo they are

miſtaken. He who was bold enough to lay hold on Chriſt himſelf, and carry him hither and thither, into the wilderneſs, and into an high mountain, and to a pinnacle of the temple, is not afraid to touch the ſcripture, and abuſe that for his own purpoſes: as he ſhewed at the ſame time that he was ſo bold with Chriſt, he then brought one ſcripture and another, to deceive and tempt him. And if Satan did preſume, and was permitted, to put Chriſt himſelf in mind of texts of ſcripture to tempt *him*, what reaſon have we to determine, that he dare not, or will not be permitted, to put wicked men in mind of texts of ſcripture, to tempt and deceive *them?* And if Satan may thus abuſe one text of ſcripture, ſo he may another. Its being a very excellent place of ſcripture, a comfortable and precious promiſe, alters not the caſe, as to his courage or ability. And if he can bring one comfortable text to the mind, ſo he may a thouſand; and may chooſe out ſuch ſcriptures as tend moſt to ſerve his purpoſe; and may heap up ſcripture-promiſes, tending, according to the perverſe application he makes of them, wonderfully to remove the riſing doubts, and to confirm the falſe joy and confidence of a poor deluded ſinner.

We know the devil's inſtruments, corrupt and heretical teachers, can and do pervert the ſcripture, to their own and others damnation, 2 Pet. iii. 16. We ſee they have the free uſe of ſcripture, in every part of it; there is no text ſo precious and ſacred, but they are permitted to abuſe it, to the eternal ruin of multitudes of ſouls; and there are no weapons they make uſe of with which they do more execution. And there is no manner of reaſon to determine, that the devil is not permitted thus to uſe the ſcripture, as well as his inſtruments. For when the latter do it, they do it as his inſtruments and ſervants, and through his inſtigation and influence: and doubtleſs he does the ſame he inſtigates others to do; the devil's ſervants do but follow their maſter, and do the ſame work that he does himſelf,

And as the devil can abuſe the ſcripture, to deceive and deſtroy men, ſo may mens own folly and corruptions as well. The ſin which is in men, acts like its father. Mens own hearts are deceitful like the devil, and uſe the ſame means to deceive.

So that it is evident, that perſons may have high affections of hope and joy, ariſing on occaſion of texts of ſcripture, yea precious promiſes of ſcripture coming ſuddenly and remarkably

to

to their minds, as though they were ſpoke to them, yea a great multitude of ſuch texts, following one another in a wonderful manner, and yet all this be no argument that theſe affections are divine, or that they are any other than the effects of Satan's deluſions.

And I would further obſerve, that perſons may have raiſed and joyful affections, which may come with the word of God, and not only ſo, but from the word, and thoſe affections not be from Satan, nor yet properly from the corruptions of their own hearts, but from ſome influence of the Spirit of God with the word, and yet have nothing of the nature of true and ſaving religion in them. Thus the ſtony-ground hearers had great joy from the word; yea, which is repreſented as ariſing from the word, as growth from a ſeed; and their affections had, in their appearance, a very great and exact reſemblance with thoſe repreſented by the growth on the good ground, the difference not appearing, until it was diſcovered by the conſequences in a time of trial: and yet there was no ſaving religion in theſe affections. ‖

VI. It is no evidence that religious affections are ſaving, or that they are otherwiſe, that there is an appearance of love in them.

There are no profeſſing Chriſtians who pretend, that this is an argument againſt the truth and ſaving nature of religious affections. But on the other hand, there are ſome who ſuppoſe, it is a good evidence that affections are from the ſanctifying and ſaving influences of the Holy Ghoſt. Their argument is, that *Satan cannot love*; this affection being directly contrary to the devil, whoſe very nature is enmity and malice. And it is true, that nothing is more excellent, heavenly and divine, than a ſpirit of true Chriſtian love to God and men: it is more excellent than *knowlege*, or *prophecy*, or *miracles*, or *ſpeaking with the tongue of men and angels*. It is the chief of the graces of God's Spirit, and the life, eſſence and ſum of all true religion; and that by which we are moſt conformed to heaven

‖ Mr. Stoddard, in his *Guide to Chriſt*, ſpeaks of it as a *common thing*, for perſons while in a natural condition, and before they have ever truly *accepted of Chriſt*, to have ſcripture-*promiſes* come to them, with *a great deal of refreſhing*; which they *take as tokens of God's love, and hope that God has accepted them*; and ſo are confident of their good eſtate. Page 8, 9. Impreſſion *anno* 1735.

heaven, and moſt contrary to hell and the devil. But yet it is ill arguing from hence, that there are no counterfeits of it. It may be obſerved, that the more excellent any thing is, the more will be the counterfeits of it. Thus there are many more counterfeits of ſilver and gold, than of iron and copper: there are many falſe diamonds and rubies, but who goes about to counterfeit common ſtones? Though the more excellent things are, the more difficult it is to make any thing that ſhall be like them, in their eſſential nature and internal virtue; yet the more manifold will the counterfeits be, and the more will art and ſubtilty be exerciſed and diſplayed, in an exact imitation of the outward appearance. Thus there is the greateſt danger of being cheated in buying of medicines that are moſt excellent and ſovereign, though it be moſt difficult to imitate them, with any thing of the like value and virtue, and their counterfeits are good for nothing when we have them. So it is with Chriſtian virtues and graces; the ſubtilty of Satan, and mens deceitful hearts, are wont chiefly to be exerciſed in counterfeiting thoſe that are in higheſt repute. So there are perhaps no graces that have more counterfeits than love and humility; theſe being virtues wherein the beauty of a true Chriſtian does eſpecially appear.

But with reſpect to love; it is plain by the ſcripture, that perſons may have a kind of religious love, and yet have no ſaving grace. Chriſt ſpeaks of many profeſſing Chriſtians that have ſuch love, whoſe love will not continue, and ſo ſhall fail of ſalvation, Matth. xxiv. 12, 13. "And becauſe iniquity ſhall "abound, the love of many ſhall wax cold. But he that ſhall "endure unto the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved." Which latter words plainly ſhew, that thoſe ſpoken of before, whoſe love ſhall not *endure to the end*, but *wax cold*, ſhould not be ſaved.

Perſons may ſeem to have love to God and Chriſt, yea to have very ſtrong and violent affections of this nature, and yet have no grace. For this was evidently the caſe with many graceleſs Jews, ſuch as cried Jeſus up ſo high, following him day and night, without meat, drink, or ſleep; ſuch as ſaid, *Lord, I will follow thee whitherſoever thou goeſt*, and cried, *Hoſanna to the ſon of David.* †

The

† Agreeable to this Mr. Stoddard obſerves, in his *Guide to Chriſt*, that ſome ſinners have pangs of affection, and give an account that they find a ſpirit of love to God, and of their aiming at the glory of

The apoſtle ſeems to intimate, that there were many in his days, who had a counterfeit love to Chriſt, in Eph. vi. 24. *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* in ſincerity. The laſt word, in the original, ſignifies *in incorruption*; which ſhews, that the apoſtle was ſenſible that there were many who had a kind of love to Chriſt, whoſe love was not pure and ſpiritual.

So alſo Chriſtian love to the people of God may be counterfeited. It is evident by the ſcripture, that there may be ſtrong affections of this kind, without ſaving grace; as there were in the Galatians towards the apoſtle Paul, when they were ready to pluck out their eyes and give them to him; although the apoſtle expreſſes his fear that their affections were come to nothing, and that he had beſtowed upon them labour in vain, Gal. iv. 11, 15.

VII. Perſons having religious affections of many kinds, accompanying one another, is not ſufficient to determine whether they have any gracious affections or no.

Though falſe religion is wont to be maimed and monſtrous, and not to have that entireneſs and ſymmetry of parts, which is to be ſeen in true religion; yet there may be a great variety of falſe affections together, that may reſemble gracious affections.

It is evident that there are counterfeits of all kinds of gracious affections; as of *love to God*, and *love to the brethren*, as has been juſt now obſerved; ſo of *godly ſorrow for ſin*, as in Pharaoh, Saul, and Ahab, and the children of Iſrael in the wilderneſs, Exod. ix. 27. 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17. and xxvi. 21. 1 Kings xxi. 27. Numb. xiv. 39, 40. and of the *fear of God*, as in the Samaritans, *who feared the Lord, and ſerved their own gods* at the ſame time, 2 Kings xvii. 32, 33. and thoſe enemies of God we read of, Pſal. lxvi. 3. who *through the greatneſs of God's power, ſubmit themſelves to him*, or, as it is in the Hebrew, *lie unto him*, i. e. yield a counterfeit reverence and

of God, having that which has a great reſemblance of ſaving grace; and that ſometimes their common affections are ſtronger than ſaving. And ſuppoſes, that ſometimes natural men may have ſuch violent pangs of falſe affection to God, that they may think themſelves willing to be damned. Page 21, and 65.

and ſubmiſſion: ſo of a *gracious gratitude*, as in the children of Iſrael, who ſang God's praiſe at the Red ſea, Pſal. cvi. 12. and Naaman the Syrian, after his miraculous cure of his leproſy, 2 Kings v. 15, *&c.*

So of *ſpiritual joy*, as in the ſtony-ground hearers, Matth. xiii. 20. and particularly many of John the Baptiſt's hearers, John v. 35. So of *zeal*, as in Jehu, 2 Kings x. 16. and in Paul before his converſion, Gal. i. 14. Phil. iii. 6. and the unbelieving Jews, Acts xxii. 3. Rom. x. 2. So graceleſs perſons may have earneſt religious *deſires*, which may be like Balaam's deſires, which he expreſſes under an extraordinary view that he had of the happy ſtate of God's people, as diſtinguiſhed from all the reſt of the world, Numb. xxiii. 9, 10. They may alſo have a ſtrong *hope* of eternal life, as the Phariſees had.

And as men, while in a ſtate of nature, are capable of a reſemblance of all kinds of religious affections, ſo nothing hinders but that they may have many of them together. And what appears in fact, does abundantly evince that it is very often ſo indeed. It ſeems commonly to be ſo, that when falſe affections are raiſed high, there are many falſe affections attend each other. The multitude that attended Chriſt into Jeruſalem, after that great miracle of raiſing Lazarus, ſeem to be moved with many religious affections at once, and all in a high degree. They ſeem to be filled with *admiration*, and there was a ſhew of an high affection of *love*, and alſo of a great degree of *reverence*, in their laying their garments on the ground for Chriſt to tread upon; and alſo of great *gratitude* to him, for the great and good works he had wrought, praiſing him with loud voices for his ſalvation; and earneſt *deſires* of the coming of God's kingdom, which they ſuppoſed Jeſus was now about to ſet up, and ſhewed great *hopes* and raiſed expectations of it, *expecting it would immediately appear*; and hence were filled with *joy*, by which they were ſo animated in their acclamations, as to make the whole city ring with the noiſe of them; and appeared great in their *zeal* and forwardneſs to attend Jeſus, and aſſiſt him without further delay, now in the time of the great feaſt of the *paſſover*, to ſet up his kingdom. And it is eaſy, from nature, and the nature of the affections, to give an account why, when one affection is raiſed very high, that it ſhould excite others; eſpecially if the affection which is raiſed high, be that of counterfeit *love*, as it was in the multitude

who

who cried *Hoſanna*. This will naturally draw many other affections after it. For, as was obſerved before, love is the chief of the affections, and as it were the fountain of them. Let us ſuppoſe a perſon who has been for ſome time in great exerciſe and terror through fear of hell, and his heart weakened with diſtreſs and dreadful apprehenſions, and upon the brink of deſpair, and is all at once delivered, by being firmly made to believe, through ſome deluſion of Satan, that God has pardoned him, and accepts him as the object of his dear love, and promiſes him eternal life; as ſuppoſe through ſome viſion, or ſtrong idea or imagination, ſuddenly excited in him, of a perſon with a beautiful countenance, ſmiling on him, and with arms open, and with blood dropping down, which the perſon conceives to be Chriſt, without any other enlightening of the underſtanding, to give a view of the ſpiritual divine excellency of Chriſt and his fulneſs, and of the way of ſalvation revealed in the goſpel; or perhaps by ſome voice or words coming as if they were ſpoke to him, ſuch as theſe, *Son, be of good cheer, thy ſins be forgiven thee*; or, *Fear not, it is the Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom*, which he takes to be immediately ſpoken by God to him, though there was no preceding acceptance of Chriſt, or cloſing of the heart with him: I ſay, if we ſhould ſuppoſe ſuch a caſe, what various paſſions would naturally croud at once, or one after another, into ſuch a perſon's mind? It is eaſy to be accounted for, from mere principles of nature, that a perſon's heart, on ſuch an occaſion, ſhould be raiſed up to the ſkies with tranſports of joy, and be filled with fervent affection, to that imaginary God or Redeemer, who he ſuppoſes has thus reſcued him from the jaws of ſuch dreadful deſtruction, that his ſoul was ſo amazed with the fears of, and has received him with ſuch endearment, as a peculiar favourite; and that now he ſhould be filled with admiration and gratitude, and his mouth ſhould be opened, and be full of talk about what he has experienced; and that, for a while, he ſhould think and ſpeak of ſcarce any thing elſe, and ſhould ſeem to magnify that God who has done ſo much for him, and call upon others to rejoice with him, and appear with a chearful countenance, and talk with a loud voice: and however, before his deliverance, he was full of quarrellings againſt the juſtice of God, that now it ſhould be eaſy for him to ſubmit to God, and own his unworthineſs, and cry out againſt himſelf, and appear to be very humble before God, and lie at

his

his feet as tame as a lamb ; and that he ſhould now confeſs his unworthineſs, and cry out, *Why me ? why me ?* (Like Saul, who when Samuel told him that God had appointed him to be king, makes anſwer, *Am not I a Benjamite, of the ſmalleſt of the tribes of Iſrael, and my family the leaſt of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin ? wherefore then ſpeakeſt thou ſo to me?* Much in the language of David, the true ſaint, 2 Sam. vii. 18. " Who am I, and what is my father's houſe, that thou haſt " brought me hitherto ?") Nor is it to be wondered at, that now he ſhould delight to be with them who acknowlege and applaud his happy circumſtances, and ſhould love all ſuch as eſteem and admire him and what he has experienced, and have violent zeal againſt all ſuch as would make nothing of ſuch things, and be diſpoſed openly to ſeparate, and as it were to proclaim war with all who be not of his party, and ſhould now glory in his ſufferings, and be very much for condemning and cenſuring all who ſeem to doubt, or make any difficulty of theſe things ; and while the warmth of his affections laſt, ſhould be mighty forward to take pains, and deny himſelf, to promote the intereſt of the party who he imagines favour ſuch things, and ſeem earneſtly deſirous to increaſe the number of them, as the Phariſees compaſſed ſea and land to make one *proſelyte*. ‡ And ſo I might go on, and mention many other things, which will naturally ariſe in ſuch circumſtances. He muſt have but ſlightly conſidered human nature, who thinks ſuch things as theſe cannot ariſe in this manner, without any ſupernatural interpoſition of divine power.

As from true divine love flow all Chriſtian affections, ſo from a counterfeit love in like manner naturally flow other falſe affections. In both caſes, love is the fountain, and the other affections are the ſtreams. The various faculties, principles and affections of the human nature, are as it were many channels from one fountain : if there be ſweet water in the fountain, ſweet water will from thence flow out into thoſe various channels ; but if the water in the fountain be poiſonous, then poiſonous ſtreams will alſo flow out into all thoſe channels. So

that

‡ " Aſſociating with godly men does not prove that a man has " grace : Ahithophel was David's companion. Sorrows for the af- " flictions of the church, and deſires for the converſion of ſouls, do " not prove it. Theſe things may be found in carnal men, and ſo " can be no evidences of grace." Stoddard's *Nature of ſaving converſion*, p. 82.

that the channels and ſtreams will be alike, correſponding one with another; but the great difference will lie in the nature of the water. Or, man's nature may be compared ſo a tree, with many branches, coming from one root: if the ſap in the root be good, there will alſo be good ſap diſtributed throughout the branches, and the fruit that is brought forth will be good and wholeſome; but if the ſap in the root and ſtock be poiſonous, ſo it will be in many branches, (as in the other caſe,) and the fruit will be deadly. The tree in both caſes may be alike; there may be an exact reſemblance in ſhape; but the difference is found only in eating the fruit. It is thus (in ſome meaſure at leaſt) oftentimes, between ſaints and hypocrites. There is ſometimes a very great ſimilitude between true and falſe experiences, in their appearance, and in what is expreſſed and related by the ſubjects of them: and the difference between them is much like the difference between the dreams of Pharaoh's chief butler and baker; they ſeemed to be much alike, inſomuch that when Joſeph interpreted the chief butler's dream, that he ſhould be delivered from his impriſonment, and reſtored to the king's favour, and his honourable office in the palace, the chief baker had raiſed hopes and expectations, and told his dream alſo; but he was wofully diſappointed; and though his dream was ſo much like the happy and well-boding dream of his companion, yet it was quite contrary in its iſſue.

VIII. Nothing can certainly be determined concerning the nature of the affections by this, that comforts and joys ſeem to follow awakenings and convictions of conſcience, in a *certain order*.

Many perſons ſeem to be prejudiced againſt affections and experiences that come in ſuch a method, as has been much inſiſted on by many divines; firſt, ſuch awakenings, fears and awful apprehenſions followed with ſuch legal humblings, in a ſenſe of total ſinfulneſs and helpleſſneſs, and then, ſuch and ſuch light and comfort: they look upon all ſuch ſchemes, laying down ſuch methods and ſteps, to be of mens deviſing: and particularly if high affections of joy follow great diſtreſs and terror, it is made by many an argument againſt thoſe affections. But ſuch prejudices and objections are without reaſon or ſcripture. Surely it cannot be unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that before God delivers perſons from a ſtate of ſin and expoſedneſs to eternal deſtruction, he ſhould give them ſome conſiderable ſenſe of the evil he delivers from: that they may be delivered

ſenſibly, and underſtand their own ſalvation, and know ſomething of what God does for them. As men that are ſaved are in two exceeding different ſtates, firſt a ſtate of condemnation, and then in a ſtate of juſtification and bleſſedneſs; and as God in the work of the ſalvation of mankind, deals with them ſuitably to their intelligent rational nature: ſo it ſeems reaſonable, and agreeable to God's wiſdom, that men who are ſaved, ſhould be in theſe two ſtates ſenſibly, firſt, that they ſhould ſenſibly to themſelves, be in a ſtate of condemnation, and ſo in a ſtate of woful calamity and dreadful miſery, and ſo afterwards ſenſibly in a ſtate of deliverance and happineſs; and that they ſhould be firſt ſenſible of their abſolute extreme neceſſity, and afterwards of Chriſt's ſufficiency and God's mercy through him.

And that it is God's manner of dealing with men, to *lead them into a wilderneſs, before he ſpeaks comfortably to them*, and ſo to order it, that they ſhall be brought into diſtreſs, and made to ſee their own helpleſſneſs, and abſolute dependence on his power and grace, before he appears to work any great deliverance for them, is abundantly manifeſt by the ſcripture. Then is God wont to *repent himſelf for his profeſſing people, when their ſtrength is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left*, and when they are brought to ſee that their falſe gods cannot help them, and that the rock in whom they truſted is vain, Deut. xxxii. 36, 37. Before God delivered the children of Iſrael out of Egypt, they were prepared for it, by being made to *ſee that they were in an evil caſe*, and *to cry unto God, becauſe of their hard bondage*, Exod. ii. 23. and v. 19. And before God wrought that great deliverance for them at the Red ſea, they were brought into great diſtreſs, *the wilderneſs had ſhut them in*, they could not turn to the right hand nor the left, and the Red ſea was before them, and the great Egyptian hoſt behind, and they were brought to ſee that they could do nothing to help themſelves, and that if God did not help them, they ſhould be immediately ſwallowed up; and then God appeared, and turned their cries into ſongs. So before they were brought to their reſt, and to enjoy the milk and honey of Canaan, God *led them through a great and terrible wilderneſs, that he might humble them, and teach them what was in their heart, and ſo do them good in their latter end*. Deut. viii. 2, 16. The woman that had the iſſue of blood twelve years, was not delivered, until ſhe had firſt *ſpent all her living on earthly phyſicians, and could not be healed of any*, and ſo was left helpleſs, having no more money to

ſpend;

ſpend; and then ſhe came to the great Phyſician, without any money or price, and was healed by him, Luke viii. 43, 44. Before Chriſt would anſwer the requeſt of the woman of Canaan, he firſt ſeemed utterly to deny her, and humbled her, and brought her to own herſelf worthy to be called a dog; and then he ſhewed her mercy, and received her as a dear child, Matth. xv. 22. &c. The apoſtle Paul, before a remarkable deliverance, was *preſſed out of meaſure, above ſtrength, inſomuch that he deſpaired even of life; but had the ſentence of death in himſelf, that he might not truſt in himſelf, but in God that raiſed the dead*, 2 Cor. i. 8, 9, 10. There was firſt a great tempeſt, and the ſhip was covered with the waves, and juſt ready to ſink, and the diſciples were brought to cry to Jeſus, *Lord, ſave us, we periſh*; and then the winds and ſeas were rebuked, and there was a great calm, Matth. viii. 24, 25, 26. The leper, before he is cleanſed, muſt have his mouth ſtopped, by a covering on his upper lip, and was to acknowlege his great miſery and utter uncleanneſs, by rending his cloaths, and crying, "Unclean, un-"clean," Lev. xiii. 45. And backſliding Iſrael, before God heals them, are brought to *acknowlege that they have ſinned, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord*, and to ſee that *they lie down in their ſhame, and that confuſion covers them*, and *that in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains*, and that God only can ſave them, Jer. iii. 23, 24, 25. Joſeph, who was ſold by his brethren, and therein was a type of Chriſt, brings his brethren into great perplexity and diſtreſs, and brings them to reflect on their ſin, and to ſay, we are verily guilty; and at laſt to reſign up themſelves entirely into his hands for bondmen; and then reveals himſelf to them, as their brother and their ſaviour.

And if we conſider thoſe extraordinary manifeſtations which God made of himſelf to ſaints of old, we ſhall find that he commonly firſt manifeſted himſelf in a way which was terrible, and then by thoſe things that were comfortable. So it was with Abraham; firſt, a *horror of great darkneſs fell upon him*, and then God revealed himſelf to him in ſweet promiſes, Gen. xv. 12, 13. So it was with Moſes at mount Sinai; firſt, God appeared to him in all the terrors of his dreadful majeſty, ſo that Moſes ſaid, *I exceedingly fear and quake*, and then he made all his goodneſs to paſs before him, and proclaimed his name, *The Lord God gracious and merciful*, &c. So it was with Elijah; firſt, there is a ſtormy wind, and earthquake, and devouring fire, and then a ſtill, ſmall, ſweet voice, 1 Kings xix. So it

was

was with Daniel ; he firſt ſaw Chriſt's countenance as lightning, that terrified him, and cauſed him to faint away ; and then he is ſtrengthened and refreſhed with ſuch comfortable words as theſe, *O Daniel, a man greatly beloved*, Dan. x. So it was with the apoſtle John, Rev. i. And there is an analogy obſervable in God's diſpenſations and deliverances which he works for his people, and the manifeſtation which he makes of himſelf to them, both ordinary and extraordinary.

But there are many things in ſcripture which do more directly ſhew, that this is God's ordinary manner in working ſalvation for the ſouls of men, and in the manifeſtations God makes of himſelf and of his mercy in Chriſt, in the ordinary works of his grace on the hearts of ſinners. The ſervant that owed his prince ten thouſand talents, is firſt held to his debt, and the king pronounces ſentence of condemnation upon him, and commands him to be ſold, and his wife and children, and payment to be made ; and thus he humbles him, and brings him to own the whole debt to be juſt, and then forgives him all. The prodigal ſon ſpends all he has, and is brought to ſee himſelf in extreme circumſtances, and to humble himſelf, and own his unworthineſs, before he is relieved and feaſted by his father, Luke xv. Old inveterate wounds muſt be ſearched to the bottom, in order to healing : and the ſcripture compares ſin, the wound of the ſoul, to this, and ſpeaks of healing this wound without thus ſearching of it, as vain and deceitful, Jer. viii. 11. Chriſt, in the work of his grace on the hearts of men, is compared to rain on the mown graſs, graſs that is cut down with a ſcythe, Pſal. lxxii. 6. repreſenting his refreſhing, comforting influences on the wounded ſpirit. Our firſt parents, after they had ſinned, were firſt terrified with God's majeſty and juſtice, and had their ſin, with its aggravations, ſet before them by their Judge, before they were relieved by the promiſe of thee ſeed of the woman. Chriſtians are ſpoken of as thoſe " that have fled " for refuge, to lay hold on the hope ſet before them," Heb. vi. 18. which repreſentation implies great fear, and ſenſe of danger preceding. To the like purpoſe, Chriſt is called " a hid- " ing-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt, and " as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the ſhadow of a " great rock in a weary land," If. xxxii. at the beginning. And it ſeems to be the natural import of the word *goſpel*, glad tidings, that it is news of deliverance and ſalvation, after great fear and diſtreſs. There is all reaſon to ſuppoſe, that God deals

with

with particular believers, as he dealt with his church, which he firſt made to hear his voice in the law, with terrible thunders and lightnings, and kept her under that ſchoolmaſter, to prepare her for Chriſt; and then comforted her with the joyful ſound of the goſpel from mount Sion. So likewiſe John the Baptiſt came to prepare the way for Chriſt, and prepare mens hearts for his reception, by ſhewing them their ſins, and by bringing the ſelf-righteous Jews off from their own righteouſneſs, telling them that they were a *generation of vipers*, and ſhewing them their danger of *the wrath to come*, telling them that *the ax was laid at the root of the trees*, &c.

And if it be indeed God's manner, (as I think the foregoing conſiderations ſhew that it undoubtedly is,) before he gives men the comfort of a deliverance from their ſin and miſery, to give them a conſiderable ſenſe of the greatneſs and dreadfulneſs of thoſe evils, and their extreme wretchedneſs by reaſon of them; ſurely it is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that perſons, at leaſt oftentimes, while under theſe views, ſhould have great diſtreſſes and terrible apprehenſions of mind: eſpecially if it be conſidered what theſe evils are, that they have a view of; which are no other than great and manifold ſins, againſt the infinite majeſty of the great JEHOVAH, and the ſuffering of the fierceneſs of his wrath to all eternity. And the more ſo ſtill, when we have many plain inſtances in ſcripture, of perſons that have actually been brought into extreme diſtreſs, by ſuch convictions, before they have received ſaving conſolations: as the multitude at Jeruſalem, who were *pricked in their heart, and ſaid unto Peter, and the reſt of the apoſtles, Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?* and the apoſtle Paul, who *trembled and was aſtoniſhed*, before he was comforted: and the jailor, when *he called for a light, and ſprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and ſaid, Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?*

From theſe things it appears to be very unreaſonable in profeſſing Chriſtians, to make this an objection againſt the truth and ſpiritual nature of the comfortable and joyful affections which any have, that they follow ſuch awful apprehenſions and diſtreſſes, as have been mentioned.

And on the other hand, it is no evidence that comforts and joys are right, becauſe they ſucceed great terrors, and amaz-

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ing fears of hell.* This ſeems to be what ſome perſons lay great weight upon; eſteeming great terrors an evidence of a great work of the law wrought on the heart, well preparing the way for ſolid comfort: not conſidering that terror, and a conviction of conſcience, are different things. For though convictions of conſcience do often cauſe terror; yet they do not conſiſt in it; and terrors do often ariſe from other cauſes. Convictions of conſcience, through the influences of God's Spirit, conſiſt in conviction of ſinfulneſs of heart and practice, and of the dreadfulneſs of ſin, as committed againſt a God of terrible majeſty, infinite holineſs and hatred of ſin, and ſtrict juſtice in puniſhing of it. But there are ſome perſons that have frightful apprehenſions of hell, a dreadful pit ready to ſwallow them up, and flames juſt ready to lay hold of them, and devils around them, ready to ſeize them; who at the ſame time ſeem to have very little proper enlightenings of conſcience, really convincing them of their ſinfulneſs of heart and life. The devil, if permitted, can terrify men as well as the Spirit of God, it is a work natural to him, and he has many ways of doing it, in a manner tending to no good. He may exceedingly affright perſons, by impreſſing on them many external images and ideas, of a countenance frowning, a ſword drawn, black clouds of vengeance, words of an awful doom pronounced,† hell gaping, devils coming, and the like, not to convince perſons of things that are true, and revealed in the word of God, but to lead them to vain and groundleſs determination;

* Mr. Shepard ſpeaks of "mens being caſt down as low as hell "by ſorrow and lying under chains, quaking in apprehenſion of "terror to come, and then raiſed up to heaven in joy, not able to "live; and yet not rent from luſt: and ſuch are objects of pity now, "and are like to be the objects of terror at the great day." *Parable of the ten Virgins*, P. i. p. 125.

† "The way of the Spirit's working, when it does convince men, "is by enlightening natural conſcience. The Spirit does not work "by giving a teſtimony, but by aſſiſting natural conſcience to do its "work. Natural conſcience is the inſtrument in the hand of God, "to accuſe, condemn, terrify, and to urge to duty. The Spirit "of God leads men into the conſideration of their danger, and makes "them to be affected therewith, Prov. xx. 27. *The ſpirit of man is "the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly.*" Stoddard's *Guide to Chriſt*, page 44.

minations ; as that their day is paſt, that they are reprobated, that God is implacable, that he has come to a reſolution immediately to cut them off, *&c.*

And the terrors which ſome perſons have, are very much owing to the particular conſtitution and temper they are of. Nothing is more manifeſt, than that ſome perſons are of ſuch a temper and frame, that their imaginations are more ſtrongly impreſſed with every thing they are affected with, than others ; and the impreſſion on the imagination re-acts on the affection, and raiſes that ſtill higher ; and ſo affection and imagination act reciprocally, one on another, till their affection is raiſed to a vaſt height, and the perſon is ſwallowed up, and loſes all poſſeſſion of himſelf.*

And ſome ſpeak of a great ſight they have of their wickedneſs, who really, when the matter comes to be well examined into and throughly weighed, are found to have little or no convictions of conſcience. They tell of a dreadful hard heart, and how their heart lies like a ſtone ; when truly they have none of thoſe things in their minds or thoughts, wherein the hardneſs of mens heart does really conſiſt. They tell of a dreadful load and ſink of ſin, a heap of black and loathſome filthineſs within them ; when, if the matter be carefully inquired into, they have not in view any thing wherein the corruption of nature does truly conſiſt, nor have they any thought of any particular thing wherein their hearts are ſinfully defective, or fall ſhort of what ought to be in them, or any exerciſes at all of corruption in them. And many think alſo they have great convictions of their actual ſins, who truly have none. They tell how their ſins are ſet in order before them, they ſee them ſtand encompaſſing them round in a row, with a dreadful frightful appearance ; when really they have not ſo much as one of the ſins they have been guilty of in the courſe of their lives, coming into view, that they are affected with the aggravations of.

And if perſons have had great terrors which really have been from the awakening and convincing influences of the Spirit of God,

* The famous Mr. Perkins diſtinguiſhes between "thoſe ſorrows "that come through convictions of conſcience, and melancholic "paſſions ariſing only from mere imaginations, ſtrongly conceived "in the brain ; which he ſays, uſually come on a ſudden, like "lightening into a houſe." vol. 1. of his works, page 385.

God, it doth not thence follow that their terrors muſt needs iſſue in true comfort. The unmortified corruption of the heart may quench the Spirit of God, (after he has been ſtriving,) by leading men to preſumptuous, and ſelf-exalting hopes and joys, as well as otherwiſe. It is not every woman who is really in travail, that brings forth a real child; but it may be a monſtrous production, without any thing of the form or properties of human nature belonging to it. Pharaoh's chief baker, after he had lain in the dungeon with Joſeph, had a viſion that raiſed his hopes, and he was lifted up out of the dungeon, as well as the chief butler; but it was to be hanged.

But if comforts and joys do not only come after great terrors and awakenings, but there be an appearance of *ſuch* prepatory convictions and humiliations, and brought about very diſtinctly, by *ſuch* ſteps, and in *ſuch* a method, as has frequently been obſervable in true converts; this is no certain ſign that the light and comforts which follow are true and ſaving. And for theſe following reaſons,

Firſt, As the devil can counterfeit all the ſaving operations and graces of the Spirit of God, ſo he can counterfeit thoſe operations that are preparatory to grace. If Satan can counterfeit thoſe effects of God's Spirit which are ſpecial, divine and ſanctifying; ſo that there ſhall be a very great reſemblance, in all that can be obſerved by others; much more eaſily may he imitate thoſe works of God's Spirit which are common, and which men, while they are yet his own children, are the ſubjects of. Theſe works are in no wiſe ſo much above him as the other. There are no works of God that are ſo high and divine, and above the powers of nature, and out of the reach of the power of all creatures, as thoſe works of his Spirit, whereby he forms the creature in his own image, and makes it to be a partaker of the divine nature. But if the devil can be the author of ſuch reſemblances of theſe as have been ſpoken of, without doubt he may of thoſe that are of an infinitely inferior kind. And it is abundantly evident in fact, that there are falſe humiliations, and falſe ſubmiſſions, as well as falſe comforts.* How far was Saul brought, though a very wicked man, and of a haughty ſpirit, when he (though a great king) was

* The venerable Stoddard obſerves, "A man may ſay, that now "he can juſtify God however he deals with him, and not be brought "off from his own righteouſneſs; and that ſome men do juſtify God,

was brought, in conviction of his sin, as it were to fall down all in tears, weeping aloud, before David his own subject, (and one that he had for a long time mortally hated, and openly treated as an enemy,) and condemn himself before him, crying out, "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast re- "warded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil?" And at another time, "I have sinned, I have played the fool, I have "erred exceedingly," 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17. and chap. xxvi. 21. And yet Saul seems then to have had very little of the influences of the Spirit of God, it being after God's Spirit had departed from him, and given him up, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. And if this proud monarch, in a pang of affection, was brought to humble himself so low, before a subject that he hated, and still continued an enemy to; there doubtless may be appearances of great conviction and humiliation in men, before God, while they yet remain enemies to him, and though they finally continue so. There is oftentimes in men, who are terrified through fears of hell, a great appearance of their being brought off from their own righteousness, when they are not brought off from it in all ways, although they are in many ways that are more plain and visible. They have only exchanged some ways of trusting in their own righteousness, for others that are more secret and subtil. Oftentimes a great degree of discouragement, as to many things they used to depend upon, is taken for humiliation: and that is called a submission to God, which is no absolute submission, but has some secret bargain in it, that it is hard to discover.

Secondly, If the operations and effects of the Spirit of God, in the convictions and comforts of true converts, may be sophisticated, then the order of them may be imitated. If Satan can imitate the things themselves, he may easily put them one after another, in such a certain order. If the devil can make A, B, and C, it is as easy for him to put A first, and B next, and C next, as to range them in a contrary order. The nature of

"God, from a partial conviction of the righteousness of their con- "demnation; conscience takes notice of their sinfulness, and tells "them that they may be righteously damned; as Pharaoh, who "justified God, Exod. ix. 27. And they give some kind of consent "to it, but many times it does not continue, they have only a pang "upon them, that usually dies away after a little time." *Guide to Christ*, page 71.

divine things is harder for the devil to imitate, than their order. He can *exactly* imitate divine operations in their nature, though his counterfeits many be very much like them in external appearance ; but he can exactly imitate their order. When counterfeits are made, there is no divine power needful in order to the placing one of them firſt, and another laſt. And therefore no order or method of operations and experiences, is any certain ſign of their divinity. That only is to be truſted to, as a certain evidence of grace, which Satan cannot do, and which it is impoſſible ſhould be brought to paſs by any power ſhort of divine.

Thirdly, We have no certain rule to determine how far God's own Spirit may go in thoſe operations and convictions which in themſelves are not ſpiritual and ſaving, and yet the perſon that is the ſubject of them, never be converted, but fall ſhort of ſalvation at laſt. There is no neceſſary connection in the nature of things, between any thing that a natural man may experience while in a ſtate of nature, and the ſaving grace of God's Spirit. And if there be no connection in the nature of things, then there can be no known and certain connection at all, unleſs it be by divine revelation. But there is no revealed certain connection between a ſtate of ſalvation, and any thing that a natural man can be the ſubject of, before he believes in Chriſt. God has revealed no certain connection between ſalvation, and any qualifications in men, but only grace and its fruits. And therefore we do not find any legal convictions, or comforts following theſe legal convictions, in any certain method or order, ever once mentioned in the ſcripture, as certain ſigns of grace, or things peculiar to the ſaints ; although we do find gracious operations and effects themſelves, ſo mentioned, thouſands of times. Which ſhould be enough with Chriſtians, who are willing to have the word of God, rather than their own philoſophy and experiences, and conjectures, as their ſufficient and ſure guide in things of this nature.

Fourthly, Experience does greatly confirm, that perſons ſeeming to have convictions and comforts following one another in ſuch a method and order, as is frequently obſervable in true converts, is no certain ſign of grace. * I appeal to all thoſe miniſters

* Mr. Stoddard, who had much experience of things of this nature, long ago obſerved, that converted and unconverted men cannot be certainly diſtinguiſhed by the account they give of their experience : the

miniſters in this land, who have had much occaſion of dealing with ſouls, in the late extraordinary ſeaſon, whether there has not been many who do not prove well, that have given a fair account of their experiences, and have ſeemed to be converted according to rule, *i. e.* with convictions and affections, ſucceeding diſtinctly and exactly, in that order and method, which has been ordinarily inſiſted on, as the order of the operations of the Spirit of God in converſion.

And as a ſeeming to have this diſtinctneſs as to ſteps and method, is no certain ſign that a perſon is converted; ſo a being without it, is no evidence that a perſon is not converted. For though it might be made evident to a demonſtration, on ſcripture-principles, that a ſinner cannot be brought heartily to receive Chriſt as his Saviour, who is not convinced of his ſin and miſery, and of his own emptineſs and helpleſſneſs, and his juſt deſert of eternal condemnation; and that therefore ſuch convictions muſt be ſome way *implied* in what is wrought in his ſoul; yet nothing proves it to be neceſſary, that all thoſe things which are implied or preſuppoſed in an act of faith in Chriſt, muſt be plainly and diſtinctly wrought in the ſoul, in ſo many ſucceſſive and ſeparate works of the Spirit, that ſhall be each one plain and manifeſt, in all who are truly converted. On the contrary, (as Mr. Shepard obſerves) ſometimes the change made in a ſaint, at firſt work, is like a confuſed chaos; ſo that the ſaints know not what to make of it. The manner of the Spirit's proceeding in them that are born of the Spirit, is very often exceeding myſterious and unſearchable: we, as it were, hear the ſound of it, the effect of it is diſcernible; but no man can tell whence it came, or whither it went. And it is oftentimes as difficult to know the way of the Spirit in the new birth, as in the firſt birth: Eccl. xi. 5. "Thou knoweſt not "what is the way of the Spirit, or how the bones do grow in "the womb of her that is with child: even ſo thou knoweſt "not the works of God, that worketh all." The ingenerating of a principle of grace in the ſoul, ſeems in ſcripture to be compared to the conceiving of Chriſt in the womb, Gal. iv. 19. And therefore the church is called Chriſt's mother, Cant. iii. 11. And ſo is every particular believer, Matth. xii. 49, 50. And the conception of Chriſt in the womb of the bleſſed virgin, by

the ſame relation of experiences being common to both. And that many perſons have given a fair account of a work of converſion, that have carried well in the eye of the world for ſeveral years, but have not proved well at laſt. *Appeal to the learned*, p. 75, 76.

by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, ſeems to be a deſigned reſemblance of the conception of Chriſt in the ſoul of a believer, by the power of the ſame Holy Ghoſt. And we know not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow, either in the womb, or heart that conceives this holy Child. The new creature may uſe that language in Pſal. cxxxix. 14, 15. "I am "fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, "and that my ſoul knoweth right well. My ſubſtance was not "hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret." Concerning the generation of Chriſt, both in his perſon, and alſo in the hearts of his people, it may be ſaid, as in Iſ. liii. 8. "Who "can declare his generation?" We know not the works of God, that worketh all. *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing*, (Prov. xxv. 2.) and to have *his path as it were in the mighty waters, that his footſteps may not be known*: and eſpecially in the works of his Spirit on the hearts of men, which are the higheſt and chief of his works. And therefore it is ſaid, Iſ. xl. 13. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his "counſellor hath taught him?" It is to be feared that ſome have gone too far towards directing the Spirit of the Lord, and marking out his footſteps for him, and limiting him to certain ſteps and methods. Experience plainly ſhews, that God's Spirit is unſearchable and untraceable, in ſome of the beſt of Chriſtians, in the method of his operations, in their converſion. Nor does the Spirit of God proceed diſcernibly in the ſteps of a particular eſtabliſhed ſcheme, one half ſo often as is imagined. A ſcheme of what is neceſſary, and according to a rule already received and eſtabliſhed by common opinion, has a vaſt (though to many a very inſenſible) influence in forming perſons notions of the ſteps and method of their own experiences. I know very well what their way is; for I have had much opportunity to obſerve it. Very often, at firſt, their experiences appear like a confuſed chaos, as Mr. Shepard expreſſes it: but then thoſe paſſages of their experience are picked out, that have moſt of the appearance of ſuch particular ſteps that are inſiſted on; and theſe are dwelt upon in the thoughts, and thoſe are told of from time to time, in the relation they give: theſe parts grow brighter and brighter in their view; and others, being neglected, grow more and more obſcure: and what they have experienced is inſenſibly ſtrained to bring all to an exact conformity to the ſcheme that is eſtabliſhed. And it becomes natural for miniſters, who have to deal with them, and direct

them

them that inſiſt upon diſtinctneſs and clearneſs of method, to do ſo too. But yet there has been ſo much to be ſeen of the operations of the Spirit of God, of late, that they who have had much to do with ſouls, and are not blinded with a ſeven-fold vail of prejudice, muſt know that the Spirit is ſo exceeding various in the manner of his operating, that in many caſes it is impoſſible to trace him, or find out his way.

What we have principally to do with, in our inquiries into our own ſtate, or directions we give to others, is the *nature* of the effect that God has brought to paſs in the ſoul. As to the ſteps which the Spirit of God took to bring that effect to paſs, we may leave them to him. We are often in ſcripture expreſsly directed to try ourſelves by the *nature* of the fruits of the Spirit; but no where by the Spirit's *method* of producing them.* Many do greatly err in their notions of a clear work of converſion; calling that a clear work, where the ſucceſſive ſteps of influence, and method of experience is clear: whereas that indeed is the cleareſt work, (not where the order of *doing* it cleareſt, but) where the ſpiritual and divine nature of the work *done*, and effect *wrought*, is moſt clear.

IX. It is no certain ſign that the religious affections which perſons have are ſuch as have in them the nature of true religion, or that they have not, that they diſpoſe perſons to ſpend much time in religion, and to be zealouſly engaged in the external duties of worſhip.

This

* Mr. Shepard, ſpeaking of the ſoul's cloſing with Chriſt, ſays. "As a child cannot tell how his ſoul comes into it, nor it may be when; "but afterwards it ſees and feels that life; ſo that he were as bad "as a beaſt, that ſhould deny an immortal ſoul; ſo here." *Parable of the ten Virgins*, Part II. p. 171.

"If the man do not know the time of his converſion, or firſt cloſing with Chriſt; the miniſter may not draw any peremptory con-"cluſion from thence, that he is not godly." *Stoddard's Guide to Chriſt*, p. 83.

"Do not think there is no compunction, or ſenſe of ſin, wrought "in the ſoul, becauſe you cannot ſo clearly diſcern and feel it; nor "the time of the working, and firſt beginning of it. I have known "many that have come with their complaints, that they *were never "humbled, they never felt it ſo;* yet there it hath been, and many "times they have ſeen it, by the other ſpectacles, and bleſſed God "for it." *Shepard's Sound Believer*, page 38. The late impreſſion in Boſton.

This has, very unreaſonably, of late been looked upon as an argument againſt the religious affections which ſome have had, that they ſpend ſo much time in reading, praying, ſinging, hearing ſermons, and the like. It is plain from the ſcripture, that it is the tendency of true grace to cauſe perſons very much to delight in ſuch religious exerciſes. True grace had this effect on Anna the propheteſs; Luke ii. 37. "She departed not "from the temple, but ſerved God with faſtings and prayers "night and day." And grace had this effect upon the primitive Chriſtians in Jeruſalem; Acts ii. 46, 47. "And they con- "tinuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking "bread from houſe to houſe, did eat their meat with gladneſs "and ſingleneſs of heart, praiſing God." Grace made Daniel delight in the duty of prayer, and ſolemnly to attend it three times a day: as it alſo did David, Pſal. lv. 17. "Evening, morning, "and at noon will I pray." Grace makes the ſaints delight in ſinging praiſes to God: Pſal. cxxxv. 3. "Sing praiſes unto his "name, for it is pleaſant." And cxlvii. 1. "Praiſe ye the "Lord: for it is good to ſing praiſes unto our God; for it is "pleaſant, and praiſe is comely." It alſo cauſes them to delight to hear the word of God preached: it makes the goſpel a joyful ſound to them, Pſal. lxxxix. 15. and makes the feet of thoſe who publiſh theſe good tidings, to be beautiful; If. lii. 7. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that "bringeth good tidings!" &c. It makes them love God's public worſhip; Pſal. xxvi. 8. "Lord I have loved the habi- "tation of thy houſe, and the place where thine honor dwel- "leth." And xxvii. 4. "One thing have I deſired of the "Lord, that will I ſeek after, that I may dwell in the houſe of "the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the "Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Pſal. lxxxiv. 1, 2, &c. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hoſts! my ſoul "longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord.— "Yea, the ſparrow hath found an houſe, and the ſwallow a neſt "for herſelf, where ſhe may lay her young, even thine altars, "O Lord of hoſts, my King, and my God. Bleſſed are they "that dwell in thy houſe: they will be ſtill praiſing thee.— "Bleſſed is the man in whoſe heart are the ways of them, "who paſſing through the valley of Baca,—go from ſtrength "to ſtrength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before "God."—verſ. 10. "A day in thy courts is better than a thou- "ſand."

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This is the nature of true grace. But yet, on the other hand, perſons being diſpoſed to abound and to be zealouſly engaged in the external exerciſes of religion, and to ſpend much time in them, is no ſure evidence of grace; becauſe ſuch a diſpoſition is found in many that have no grace. So it was with the Iſraelites of old, whoſe ſervices were abominable to God; they attended the "new moons, and ſabbaths, and calling of aſſem-"blies, and ſpread forth their hands, and made many prayers," Iſ. i. 12—15. So it was with the Phariſees; they *made long prayers and faſted twice a week.* Falſe religion may cauſe perſons to be loud and earneſt in prayer: Iſ. lviii. 4. "Ye ſhall not "faſt as ye do this day, to cauſe your voice to be heard on "high." That religion which is not ſpiritual and ſaving, may cauſe men to delight in religious duties and ordinances: Iſ. lviii. 2. "Yet they ſeek me daily, and delight to know my "ways, as a nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the "ordinance of their God: they aſk of me the ordinances of "juſtice: they take delight in approaching to God." It may cauſe them to take delight in hearing the word of God preached; as it was with Ezekiel's hearers, Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they "ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but "they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew "much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs. "And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely ſong of one that "hath a pleaſant voice, and can play well on an inſtrument: "for they hear thy words, but they do them not." So it was with Herod; he *heard* John the Baptiſt *gladly*, Mark vi. 20. So it was with others of his hearers, "for a ſeaſon they rejoic-"ed in his light," John v. 35. So the ſtony-ground hearers *heard the word with joy.*

Experience ſhews, that perſons, from falſe religion, may be inclined to be exceeding abundant in the external exerciſes of religion; yea, to give themſelves up to them, and devote almoſt their whole time to them. Formerly a ſort of people were very numerous in the Romiſh church, called *recluſes*, who forſook the world, and utterly abandoned the ſociety of mankind, and ſhut themſelves up cloſe, in a narrow cell, with a vow never to ſtir out of it, nor to ſee the face of any of mankind any more; (unleſs that they might be viſited in caſe of ſickneſs;) to ſpend all their days in the exerciſes of devotion and converſe with God. There were alſo in old time, great multitudes call-

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ed Hermites and Anchorites, that left the world to ſpend all their days in loneſome deſarts, to give themſelves up to religious contemplations and exerciſes of devotion ; ſome ſorts of them having no dwellings, but the caves and vaults of the mountains, and no food, but the ſpontaneous productions of the earth.—I once lived, for many months, next door to a Jew, (the houſes adjoining one to another,) and had much opportunity daily to obſerve him ; who appeared to me the devouteſt perſon that ever I ſaw in my life ; great part of his time being ſpent in acts of devotion, at his eaſtern window, which opened next to mine, ſeeming to be moſt earneſtly engaged, not only in the day-time, but ſometimes whole nights.

X. Nothing can be certainly known of the nature of religious affections by this, that they much diſpoſe perſons with their mouths to praiſe and glorify God. This indeed is implied in what has been juſt now obſerved, of abounding and ſpending much time in the external exerciſes of religion, and was alſo hinted before : but becauſe many ſeem to look upon it as a bright evidence of gracious affection, when perſons appear greatly diſpoſed to praiſe and magnify God, to have their mouths full of his praiſes, and affectionately to be calling on others to praiſe and extol him, I thought it deſerved a more particular conſideration.

No Chriſtian will make it an argument againſt a perſon, that he ſeems to have ſuch a diſpoſition. Nor can it reaſonably be looked upon as an evidence for a perſon, if thoſe things that have been already obſerved and proved, be duly conſidered, *viz.* that perſons, without grace, may have high affections towards God and Chriſt, and that their affections being ſtrong, may fill their mouths, and incline them to ſpeak much, and very earneſtly, about the things they are affected with, and that there may be counterfeits of all kinds of gracious affection. But it will appear more evidently and directly, that this is no certain ſign of grace, if we conſider what inſtances the ſcripture gives us of it in thoſe that were graceleſs. We often have an account of this, in the multitude that were preſent when Chriſt preached and wrought miracles ; Mark ii. 12. " And immediately he aroſe, " took up his bed, and went forth before them all, inſomuch " that they were all amazed, and glorified God, ſaying, We " never ſaw it on this faſhion." So Matth. ix. 8. and Luke v. 26. Alſo Matth. xv. 31. " Inſomuch that the multitude " wondered when they ſaw the dumb to ſpeak, the maimed to " be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to ſee : and they

" glorified

" glorified the God of Iſrael." So we are told, that on occaſion of Chriſt's raiſing the ſon of the widow of Nain, Luke vii. 16. " There came a fear on all: and they glorified God, " ſaying, That a great prophet is riſen up among us; and, " That God hath viſited his people." So we read of their glorifying Chriſt, or ſpeaking exceeding highly of him, Luke iv. 15. " And he taught in their ſynagogues, being glorified of " all." And how did they praiſe him with loud voices, crying, *Hoſanna to the ſon of David, hoſanna in the higheſt; bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, a little before he was crucified! And after Chriſt's aſcenſion, when the apoſtles had healed the impotent man, we are told, that " all men glorified " God for that which was done," Acts iv. 21. When the Gentiles in Antioch of Piſidia, heard from Paul and Barnabas, that God would reject the Jews, and take the Gentiles to be his people in their room, they were affected with this goodneſs of God to the Gentiles, *and glorified the word of the Lord*: but all that did ſo were not true believers; but only a certain elect number of them; as is intimated in the account we have of it, Acts xiii. 48. " And when the Gentiles heard this, they " were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many " as were ordained to eternal life, believed." So of old the children of Iſrael at the Red ſea, *ſang God's praiſe; but ſoon forgat his works*. And the Jews in Ezekiel's time, *with their mouths ſhewed much love, while their hearts went after their covetouſneſs*. And it is foretold of falſe profeſſors, and real enemies of religion, that they ſhould ſhew a forwardneſs to glorify God; Iſ. lxvi. 5. " Hear the word of the Lord, ye that " tremble at his word, Your brethren that hated you, that caſt " you out for my name's ſake, ſaid Let the Lord be glorified."

It is no certain ſign that a perſon is graciouſly affected, if in the midſt of his hopes and comforts, he is greatly affected with God's unmerited mercy to him that is ſo unworthy, and ſeems greatly to extol and magnify free grace. Thoſe that yet remain with unmortified pride and enmity againſt God, may, when they imagine that they have received extraordinary kindneſs from God, cry out of their unworthineſs, and magnify God's undeſerved goodneſs to them, from no other conviction of their ill-deſervings, and from no higher principle, than Saul had, who while he yet remained, with unſubdued pride and enmity againſt David, was brought, though a king, to acknowlege his unworthineſs, and cry out, *I have played the fool, I have*

I have erred exceedingly, and with great affection and admiration, to magnify and extol David's unmerited and unexampled kindneſs to him, 1 Sam. xxv. 16—19. and xxvi. 21. and from no higher principle, than that from whence Nebuchadnezzar was affected with God's diſpenſations, that he ſaw and was the ſubject of, and praiſes, extols and honours the King of heaven; and both he, and Darius, in their high affections, call upon all nations to praiſe God, Dan. iii. 28, 29, 30. and iv. 1, 2, 3, 34, 35, 37. and vi. 25, 26, 27.

XI. It is no ſign that affections are right, or that they are wrong, that they make perſons that have them, exceeding confident that what they experience is divine, and that they are in a good eſtate.

It is an argument with ſome, againſt perſons, that they are deluded if they pretend to be aſſured of their good eſtate, and to be carried beyond all doubting of the favor of God; ſuppoſing that there is no ſuch thing to be expected in the church of God, as a full and abſolute aſſurance of hope; unleſs it be in ſome very extraordinary circumſtances; as in the caſe of martyrdom: contrary to the doctrine of Proteſtants, which has been maintained by their moſt celebrated writers againſt the Papiſts; and contrary to the plaineſt ſcripture-evidence. It is manifeſt, that it was a common thing for the ſaints that we have a hiſtory or particular account of in ſcripture, to be aſſured. God in the plaineſt and moſt poſitive manner, revealed and teſtified his ſpecial favor to Noah, Abraham, Iſaac, Jacob, Moſes, Daniel, and others. Job often ſpeaks of his ſincerity and uprightneſs with the greateſt imaginable confidence and aſſurance, often calling God to witneſs to it; and ſays plainly, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I ſhall "ſee him for myſelf, and not another," Job xix. 25,&c. David, throughout the book of Pſalms, almoſt every where ſpeaks without any heſitancy, and in the moſt poſitive manner, of God as his God; glorying in him as his portion and heritage, his rock and confidence, his ſhield, ſalvation, and high tower, and the like. Hezekiah appeals to God, as one that knew that he had walked before him in truth, and with a perfect heart, 2 Kings xx. 3. Jeſus Chriſt, in his dying diſcourſe with his eleven diſciples, in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of John, (which was as it were Chriſt's laſt will and teſtament to his diſciples, and to his whole church) often declares his

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ſpecial and everlaſting love to them, in the plaineſt and moſt poſitive terms; and promiſes them a future participation with him in his glory, in the moſt abſolute manner; and tells them at the ſame time, that he does ſo, to the end, that their joy might be *full*; John xv. 11. "Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." See alſo at the concluſion of his whole diſcourſe, Chap. xvi. 33. "Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye ſhall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Chriſt was not afraid of ſpeaking too plainly and poſitively to them; he did not deſire to hold them in the leaſt ſuſpence. And he concluded that laſt diſcourſe of his, with a prayer in their preſence, wherein he ſpeaks poſitively to his Father of thoſe eleven diſciples, as having all of them ſavingly known him, and believed in him, and received and kept his word; and that they were not of the world; and that for their ſakes he ſanctified himſelf; and that his will was, that they ſhould be with him in his glory: and tells his Father, that he ſpake theſe things in his prayer, to the end, that his joy might be fulfilled in them, verſ. 13. By theſe things it is evident, that it is agreeable to Chriſt's deſigns, and the contrived ordering and diſpoſition Chriſt makes of things in his church, that there ſhould be ſufficient and abundant proviſion made, that his ſaints might have full aſſurance of their future glory.

The apoſtle Paul, through all his epiſtles, ſpeaks in an aſſured ſtrain; ever ſpeaking poſitively of his ſpecial relation to Chriſt, his Lord and Maſter and Redeemer, and his intereſt in, and expectation of the future reward. It would be endleſs to take notice of all places that might be enumerated; I ſhall mention but three or four: Gal. ii. 20. "Chriſt liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me." Phil. i. 21. "For me to live is Chriſt, and to die is gain." 2 Tim. i. 12. "I know whom I have believed, and I am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day." 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. "I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous judge will give me at that day."

And

And the nature of the covenant of grace, and God's declared ends in the appointment and conſtitution of things in that covenant, do plainly ſhew it to be God's deſign to make ample proviſion for the ſaints, having an aſſured hope of eternal life, while living here upon earth. For ſo are all things ordered and contrived in that covenant, that every thing might be made ſure on God's part. *The covenant is ordered in all things and ſure:* the promiſes are moſt full, and very often repeated, and various ways exhibited; and there are many witneſſes, and many ſeals; and God has confirmed his promiſes with an oath. And God's declared deſign in all this is, that the heirs of the promiſes might have an undoubting hope, and full joy, in an aſſurance of their future glory. Heb. vi. 17, 18. "Wherein "God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of pro- "miſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath: "that by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for "God to lie, we might have a ſtrong conſolation, who have "fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us." But all this would be in vain, to any ſuch purpoſe, as the ſaints ſtrong conſolation, and hope of their obtaining future glory, if their intereſt in thoſe ſure promiſes in ordinary caſes, was not attainable. For God's promiſes and oaths, let them be as ſure as they will, cannot give ſtrong hope and comfort to any particular perſon, any further than he can know that thoſe promiſes are made to him. And in vain is proviſion made in Jeſus Chriſt, that believers might be perfect as pertaining to the conſcience, as is ſignified Heb. ix. 9. if aſſurance of freedom from the guilt of ſin is not attainable.

It further appears that aſſurance is not only attainable in ſome very extraordinary caſes, that *all* Chriſtians are directed to give all diligence to make their calling and election ſure, and are told how they may do it, 2 Pet. i. 5—8. And it is ſpoken of as a thing very unbecoming of Chriſtians, and an argument of ſomething very blameable in them, not to know whether Chriſt be in them or no, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. "Know ye not your own ſelves, "how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And it is implied that it is an argument of a very blameable negligence in Chriſtians, if they practice Chriſtianity after ſuch a manner as to remain uncertain of the reward, in that 1 Cor. ix. 26. "I therefore ſo run, as not uncertainly." And to add no more, it is manifeſt, that Chriſtians knowing their intereſts in the ſaving benefits of Chriſtianity is a thing ordinarily attainable, becauſe the apoſtles tell us by what means *Chriſtians* (and

not

not only *apoſtles* and *martyrs*) were wont to know this; 1 Cor. ii. 12. "Now we have received, not the ſpirit of the world, but "the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things "that are freely given to us of God. And 1 John ii. 3. "And "hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his com-"mandments. And verſ. 5. "Hereby know we that we are "in him." Chap. iii. 14. "We know that we have paſſed "from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren." verſ. 19. "Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and ſhall aſſure "our hearts before him." verſ. 24. "Hereby we know that he "abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." So Chap. iv. 13. and Chap. v. 2. and verſ. 19.

Therefore it muſt needs be very unreaſonable to determine, that perſons are hypocrites, and their affections wrong, becauſe they ſeem to be out of doubt of their own ſalvation, and the affections they are the ſubjects of ſeem to baniſh all fears of hell.

On the other hand, it is no ſufficient reaſon to determine that men are ſaints, and their affections gracious, becauſe the affections they have are attended with an exceeding confidence that their ſtate is good, and their affections divine.† Nothing can be certainly argued from their confidence, how great and ſtrong ſoever it ſeems to be. If we ſee a man that boldly calls God his Father, and commonly ſpeaks in the moſt bold, familiar,

† "O profeſſor, look carefully to your foundation: *Be not high "minded, but fear.* You have, it may be, done and ſuffered many "things in and for religion; you have excellent gifts and ſweet "comforts; a warm zeal for God, and high confidence of your in-"tegrity: all this may be right, for ought that I, or (it may be) you "know: but yet it is poſſible it may be falſe alſo. You have "ſometimes judged yourſelves, and pronounced yourſelves upright; "but remember your final ſentence is not yet pronounced by your "Judge. And what if God weigh you over again, in his more equal "balance, and ſhould ſay, *Mene, Tekel, Thou art weighed in the ba-"lance, and art found wanting?* What a confounded man wilt thou "be, under ſuch a ſentence! *Quæ ſplendent in conſpectu hominis, ſor-"dent in conſpectu Judicis*; Things that are highly eſteemed of men, "are an abomination in the ſight of God: he ſeeth not as men "ſeeth. Thy heart may be falſe, and thou not know it: yea, it "may be falſe, and thou ſtrongly confident of its integrity," *Fla-"vel's Touchſtone of Sincerity*, Chap. ii. ſect. 5.

"Some hypocrites are a great deal more confident than many "ſaints." *Stoddard's diſcourſe on the way to know ſincerity and hypo-criſy*, p. 128.

liar, and appropriating language in prayer, *My Father, my dear Redeemer, my ſweet Saviour, my beloved,* and the like;—and it is a common thing for him to uſe the moſt confident expreſſions before men, about the goodneſs of his ſtate; ſuch as, *I know certainly that God is my Father; I know ſo ſurely as there is a God in heaven, that he is my God; I know I ſhall go to heaven, as well as if I were there; I know that God is now manifeſting himſelf to my ſoul, and is now ſmiling upon me*; and ſeems to have done for ever with any inquiry or examination into his ſtate, as a thing ſufficiently known, and out of doubt, and to contemn all that ſo much as intimate or ſuggeſt that there is ſome reaſon to doubt or fear whether all is right; ſuch things are no ſigns at all that it is indeed ſo as he is confident it is.* Such an over-bearing, high-handed and violent ſort of confidence as this, ſo affecting to declare itſelf with a moſt glaring ſhow in the ſight of men, which is to be ſeen in many, has not the countenance of a true Chriſtian aſſurance: it favours more of the ſpirit of the Phariſees, who never doubted but that they were ſaints, and the moſt eminent of ſaints, and were bold to go to God, and come up near to him, and lift up their eyes, and thank him for the great diſtinction he had made between them and other men: and when Chriſt intimated that they were blind and graceleſs, deſpiſed the ſuggeſtion, John ix. 40. "And ſome of the Phariſees which were with him, heard theſe "words, and ſaid unto him, Are we blind alſo?" If they had more of the ſpirit of the Publican, with their confidence, who in a ſenſe of his exceeding unworthineſs, ſtood afar off, and durſt not ſo much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but ſmote on his breaſt, and cried out of himſelf as a ſinner, their confidence would have more of the aſpect of the confidence of one that humbly truſts and hopes in Chriſt, and has no confidence in himſelf.

If

* "Doth the work of faith in ſome believers, bear upon its top-"branches, the full ripe fruits of a bleſſed aſſurance? Lo, what "ſtrong confidence, and high built perſuaſions of an intereſt in God, "have ſometimes been found in unſanctified ones! Yea, ſo ſtrong "may this falſe aſſurance be, that they dare boldly venture to go to "the judgment-ſeat of God, and there defend it. Doth the Spirit "of God fill the heart of the aſſured believer with joy unſpeakable, "and full of glory, giving them, through faith, a prelibation or "foretaſte of heaven itſelf, in thoſe firſt-fruits of it? how near to "this comes what the apoſtle ſuppoſes may be found in apoſtates!" *Flavel's Huſbandry ſpiritualized*, Chap. xii.

If we do but conſider what the hearts of natural men are, what principles they are under the dominion of, what blindneſs and deceit, what ſelf-flattery, ſelf-exultation, and ſelf-confidence reigns there, we need not at all wonder that their high opinion of themſelves, and confidence of their happy circumſtances, be as high and ſtrong as mountains, and as violent as a tempeſt, when once conſcience is blinded, and convictions killed, with falſe, high affections, and thoſe forementioned principles let looſe, fed up and prompted by falſe joys and comforts, excited by ſome pleaſing imaginations impreſſed by Satan, transforming himſelf into an angel of light.

When once a hypocrite is thus eſtabliſhed in a falſe hope, he has not thoſe things to cauſe him to call his hope in queſtion, that oftentimes are the occaſion of the doubting of true ſaints; as, *firſt*, he has not that cautious ſpirit, that great ſenſe of the vaſt importance of a ſure foundation, and that dread of being deceived. The comforts of the true ſaints increaſe awakening and caution, and a lively ſenſe how great a thing it is to appear before an infinitely holy, juſt, and omniſcient Judge. But falſe comforts put an end to theſe things, and dreadfully ſtupify the mind. *Secondly*, The hypocrite has not the knowlege of his own blindneſs, and the deceitfulneſs of his own heart, and that mean opinion of his own underſtanding, that the true ſaint has. Thoſe that are deluded with falſe diſcoveries and affections, are evermore highly conceited of their light and underſtanding. *Thirdly*, The devil does not aſſault the hope of the hypocrite, as he does the hope of a true ſaint. The devil is a great enemy to a true Chriſtian hope, not only becauſe it tends greatly to the comfort of him that hath it, but alſo becauſe it is a thing of a holy, heavenly nature, greatly tending to promote and cheriſh grace in the heart, and a great incentive to ſtrictneſs and diligence in the Chriſtian life. But he is no enemy to the hope of a hypocrite, which above all things eſtabliſhes his intereſt in him that has it. A hypocrite may retain his hope without oppoſition, as long as he lives, the devil never diſturbing it, not attempting to diſturb it. But there is perhaps no true Chriſtian but what has his hope aſſaulted by him. Satan aſſaulted Chriſt himſelf, upon this, whether he were the Son of God or no: and the ſervant is not above his Maſter, nor the diſciple above his Lord; it is enough for the diſciple, that is moſt privileged in this world, to be as his Maſter. *Fourthly*, He who has a falſe hope, has not that ſight

of

of his own corruptions, which the ſaint has. A true Chriſ
tian has ten times ſo much to do with his heart, and its corrup
tions, as an hypocrite : and the ſins of his heart and practice
appear to him in their blackneſs ; they look dreadful ; and i
often appears a very myſterious thing, that any grace can b
conſiſtent with ſuch corruption, or ſhould be in ſuch a heart
But a falſe hope hides corruption, covers it all over, and th
hypocrite looks clean and bright in his own eyes.

There are two ſorts of hypocrites : one that are deceived wit
their outward morality and external religion ; many of whic
are profeſſed Arminians, in the doctrine of juſtification : an
the other are thoſe that are deceived with falſe diſcoveries an
elevations ; which often cry down works, and mens own righ
teouſneſs, and talk much of free grace ; but at the ſame tim
make a righteouſneſs of their diſcoveries, and of their humilia
tion, and exalt themſelves to heaven with them. Theſe tw
kinds of hypocrites Mr. Shepard, in his expoſition of the Pa
rable of the ten virgins, diſtinguiſhes by the names of *legal* an
evangelical hypocrites ; and often ſpeaks of the latter as th
worſt. And it is evident that the latter are commonly by fa
the moſt confident in their hope, and with the moſt difficult
brought off from it : I have ſcarcely known the inſtance of ſuch
an one, in my life, that has been undeceived. The chie
grounds of the confidence of many of them, are the very ſam
kind of impulſes and ſuppoſed revelations, (ſometimes wit
texts of ſcripture, and ſometimes without,) that ſo many of lat
have had concerning future events ; calling theſe impulſe
about their good eſtate, the witneſs of the Spirit ; entirely mi
underſtanding the nature of the witneſs of the Spirit, as I ſha
ſhew hereafter. Thoſe that have had viſions and impulſe
about other things, it has generally been to reveal ſuch thing
as they are deſirous and fond of : and no wonder that perſon
who give heed to ſuch things, have the ſame ſort of viſions o
impreſſions about their own eternal ſalvation, to reveal to the
that their ſins are forgiven them, that their names are writte
in the book of life, that they are in high favour with God, &
and eſpecially when they earneſtly ſeek, expect and wai
for evidence of their election and ſalvation this way, as th
ſureſt and moſt glorious evidence of it. Neither is it an
wonder, that when they have ſuch a ſuppoſed revelation o
their good eſtate, it raiſes in them the higheſt degree of con
fidence of it. It is found by abundant experience, that thoſ

who

who are led away by impulſes and imagined revelations, are extremely confident: they ſuppoſe that the great JEHOVAH has declared theſe and thoſe things to them; and having his immediate teſtimony, a ſtrong confidence is the higheſt virtue. Hence they are bold to ſay, *I know this or that*;—*I know certainly*;—*I am as ſure as that I have a being*, and the like: and they deſpiſe all argument and inquiry in the caſe. And above all things elſe, it is eaſy to be accounted for, that impreſſions and impulſes about that which is ſo pleaſing, ſo ſuiting their ſelf love and pride, as their being the dear children of God, diſtinguiſhed from moſt in the world in his favor, ſhould make them ſtrongly confident: eſpecially when with their impulſes and revelations they have high affections, which they take to be the moſt eminent exerciſes of grace. I have known of ſeveral perſons, that have had a fond deſire of ſomething of a temporal nature, through a violent paſſion that has poſſeſſed them, and they have been earneſtly purſuing the thing they have deſired ſhould come to paſs, and have met with great difficulty and many diſcouragements in it, but at laſt have had an impreſſion or ſuppoſed revelation that they ſhould obtain what they ſought; and they have looked upon it as a ſure promiſe from the Moſt High, which has made them moſt ridiculouſly confident, againſt all manner of reaſon to convince them to the contrary, and all events working againſt them. And there is nothing hinders, but that perſons who are ſeeking their ſalvation, may be deceived by the like deluſive impreſſions, and be made confident of that, the ſame way.

The confidence of many of this ſort of hypocrites, that Mr. Shepard calls *evangelical hypocrites*, is like the confidence of ſome mad men, who think they are kings: they will maintain it againſt all manner of reaſon and evidence. And in one ſenſe, it is much more immovable than a truly gracious aſſurance; a true aſſurance is not upheld, but by the ſoul's being kept in a holy frame, and grace maintained in lively exerciſe. If the actings of grace do much decay in the Chriſtian, and he falls into a lifeleſs frame, he loſes his aſſurance: but this kind of confidence of hypocrites will not be ſhaken by ſin; they (at leaſt ſome of them) will maintain their boldneſs in their hope, in the moſt corrupt frames and wicked ways; which is a ſure evidence of their deluſion.*

* Mr. Shepard ſpeaks of it, as a "preſumptuous peace, that is "not interrupted and broke by evil works." And ſays, That "the "ſpirit

And here I cannot but obſerve, that there are certain doctrines often preached to the people, which need to be delivered with more caution and explanation than they frequently are; for as they are by many underſtood, they tend greatly to eſtabliſh this deluſion and falſe confidence of hypocrites. The doctrines I ſpeak of are thoſe of *Chriſtians living by faith, not by ſight*; *their giving glory to God, by truſting him in the dark*; *living upon Chriſt, and not upon experiences*; *not making their good frames the foundation of their faith:* which are excellent and important doctrines indeed, rightly underſtood, but corrupt and deſtructive, as many underſtand them. The ſcripture ſpeaks of living or walking by faith, and not by ſight, in no other way than theſe, *viz.* a being governed by a reſpect to eternal things, that are the objects of faith, and are not ſeen, and not by a reſpect to temporal things, which are ſeen; and believing things revealed, that we never ſaw with bodily eyes; and alſo living by faith in the promiſe of future things, without yet ſeeing or enjoying the things promiſed, or knowing the way how they can be fulfilled. This will be eaſily evident to any one that looks over the ſcriptures, which ſpeak of *faith* in oppoſition to *ſight*; as 2 Cor. iv. 18. and v. 7. Heb. xi. 1, 8, 13, 17, 29. Rom. viii. 24. John xx. 29. But this doctrine, as it is underſtood by many, is, that Chriſtians ought firmly to believe and truſt in Chriſt, without ſpiritual ſight or light, and although they are in a dark dead frame, and, for the preſent, have no ſpiritual experiences or diſcoveries. And it is truly the duty of thoſe who are thus in darkneſs, to come out of darkneſs into light, and believe. But that they ſhould confidently believe and truſt, while they yet remain without ſpiritual light or ſight, is an antiſcriptural and abſurd doctrine. The ſcripture is ignorant of any ſuch faith in Chriſt of the operation

" ſpirit will ſigh, and not ſing in that boſom, whence corrupt diſ-
" poſitions and paſſions break out." And that " though men in
" ſuch frames may ſeem to maintain the conſolation of the Spirit,
" and not ſuſpect their hypocriſy, under pretence of truſting the
" Lord's mercy; yet they cannot avoid the condemnation of the
" world." *Parable of the ten virgins*, Part I. P. 139.

Dr. Ames ſpeaks of it as a thing, by which the peace of a wicked man may be diſtinguiſhed from the peace of a godly man, " that the
" peace of a wicked man continues, whether he performs the duties
" of piety and righteouſneſs, or no; provided thoſe crimes are avoid-
" ed that appear horrid to nature itſelf." *Caſes of conſcience, lib.* III. Chap. vii.

operation of God, that is not founded in a ſpiritual ſight of Chriſt. That believing on Chriſt, which accompanies a title to everlaſting life, is a "ſeeing the Son, and believing on "him." John vi. 40. True faith in Chriſt is never exerciſed, any further than perſons "behold as in a glaſs the glory "of the Lord, and have the knowlege of the glory of God "in the face of Jeſus Chriſt," 2 Cor. iii. 18. and iv. 6. They into whoſe minds "the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, "who is the image of God, does not ſhine, they believe not," 2 Cor. iv. 4. That faith, which is without ſpiritual light, is not the faith of the children of the light, and of the day; but the preſumption of the children of darkneſs. And therefore to preſs and urge them to believe, without any ſpiritual light or ſight, tends greatly to help forward the deluſions of the prince of darkneſs. Men not only cannot exerciſe faith without ſome ſpiritual light, but they can exerciſe faith only juſt in ſuch proportion as they have ſpiritual light. Men will truſt in God no further than they know him: and they cannot be in the exerciſe of faith in him one ace further than they have a ſight of his fulneſs and faithfulneſs *in exerciſe*. Nor can they have the exerciſe of truſt in God, any further than they are in a *gracious frame*. They that are in a dead carnal frame, doubtleſs ought to truſt God; becauſe that would be the ſame thing as coming out of their bad frame, and turning to God: but to exhort men confidently to truſt in God, and ſo hold up their hope and peace, though they are not in a gracious frame, and continue ſtill to be ſo, is the ſame thing in effect, as to exhort them confidently to truſt in God, but not with a gracious truſt: and what is that but a wicked preſumption? It is juſt ſo impoſſible for men to have a ſtrong or lively truſt in God, when they have no lively exerciſes of grace, or ſenſible Chriſtian experiences, as it is for them to be in the lively exerciſes of grace, without the exerciſes of grace.

It is true, that it is the duty of God's people to truſt in him when in darkneſs, and though they remain ſtill in darkneſs, in that ſenſe, that they ought to truſt in God when the aſpects of his providence are dark, and look as though God had forſaken them, and did not hear their prayers, and many clouds gather, and many enemies ſurround them, with a formidable aſpect, threatning to ſwallow them up, and all events of providence ſeem to be againſt them, all circumſtances ſeem to render the promiſes of God difficult to be fulfilled, and God

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muſt be truſted out of ſight, *i. e.* when we cannot ſee which way it is poſſible for him to fulfil his word, every thing but God's mere word makes it look unlikely, ſo that if perſons believe, they muſt hope againſt hope. Thus the ancient Patriarchs, and Job, and the Pſalmiſt, and Jeremiah, Daniel, Shadrach, Meſhech and Abednego, and the apoſtle Paul gave glory to God by truſting in God in darkneſs. And we have many inſtances of ſuch a glorious victorious faith in the eleventh of the Hebrews. But how different a thing is this, from truſting in God, without ſpiritual ſight, and being at the ſame time in a dead and carnal frame!

There is alſo ſuch a thing as ſpiritual light's being let into the ſoul in one way, when it is not in another; and ſo there is ſuch a thing as the ſaints truſting in God, and alſo knowing their good eſtate, when they are deſtitute of ſome kinds of experience. As for inſtance, they may have clear views of God's ſufficiency and faithfulneſs, and ſo confidently truſt in him, and know that they are his children; and at the ſame time, not have thoſe clear and ſweet ideas of his love, as at other times: for it was thus with Chriſt himſelf in his laſt paſſion. And they may have views of much of God's ſovereignty, holineſs, and allſufficiency, enabling them quietly to ſubmit to him, and exerciſe a ſweet and moſt encouraging hope in God's fulneſs, when they are not ſatisfied of their own good eſtate. But how different things are theſe, from confidently truſting in God, without ſpiritual light or experience!

Thoſe that thus inſiſt on perſons living by faith, when they have no experience, and are in very bad frames, are alſo very abſurd in their notions of faith. What they mean by faith is, believing that they are in a good eſtate. Hence they count it a dreadful ſin for them to doubt of their ſtate, whatever frames they are in, and whatever wicked things they do, becauſe it is the great and heinous ſin of unbelief; and he is the beſt man, and puts moſt honor upon God, that maintains his hope of his good eſtate the moſt confidently and immoveably, when he has the leaſt light or experience; that is to ſay, when he is in the worſt and wickedeſt frame and way; becauſe, forſooth, that is a ſign that he is ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God, and againſt hope believes in hope. But what Bible do they learn this notion of faith out of, that it is a man's confidently

believing

believing that he is in a good eſtate? * If this be faith, the Phariſees had faith in an eminent degree; ſome of which, Chriſt teaches, committed the unpardonable ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. The ſcripture repreſents faith, as that by which men are *brought into* a good eſtate; and therefore it cannot be the ſame thing, as believing that they *are already* in a good eſtate. To ſuppoſe that faith conſiſts in perſons believing that they are in a good eſtate, is in effect the ſame thing, as to ſuppoſe that faith conſiſts in a perſon's believing that he has faith, or in believing that he believes.

Indeed perſons doubting of their good eſtate, may in ſeveral reſpects *ariſe from* unbelief. It may be from unbelief or becauſe they have ſo little faith, that they have ſo little *evidence* of their good eſtate: If they had more experience of the actings of faith, and ſo more experience of the exerciſe of grace, they would have clearer evidence that their ſtate was good; and ſo their doubts would be removed. And then their doubting of their ſtate may be from unbelief thus, when though there be many things that are good evidences of a work of grace in them, yet they doubt very much whether they are really in a ſtate of favour with God, becauſe it is *they*, thoſe that are ſo unworthy, and have done ſo much to provoke God to anger againſt them. Their doubts in ſuch a caſe ariſe from unbelief, as they ariſe from want of a ſufficient ſenſe *of*, and reliance *on* the infinite riches of God's grace, and the ſufficiency of Chriſt for the chief of ſinners. They may alſo be from unbelief, when they doubt of their ſtate, becauſe of the myſtery of God's dealings with them: they are not able to reconcile ſuch diſpenſations with God's favour to them: or when they doubt whether they have any intereſt in the promiſes, becauſe the promiſes

* "Men do not know that they are godly, by believing that they "are godly. We know many things by faith, Heb. xi. 3. *By faith "we underſtand that the worlds were made by the word of God.* Faith "is *the evidence of things not ſeen*, Heb. xi. 1. Thus men know the "Trinity of perſons of the Godhead; that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son "of God; that he that believes in him will have eternal life; the "reſurrection of the dead. And if God ſhould tell a ſaint that he "hath grace, he might know it by believing the word of God. "But it is not this way, that godly men do know that they have grace. "It is not revealed in the word, and the Spirit of God doth not teſ-"tify it to particular perſons." *Stoddard's nature of ſaving converſion*, p. 83, 84.

promiſes from the aſpect of providence appear ſo unlikely to be fulfilled; the difficulties that are in the way, are ſo many and great. Such doubting ariſes from want of dependence upon God's almighty power, and his knowlege and wiſdom, as infinitely above theirs. But yet, in ſuch perſons, their unbelief, and their doubting of their ſtate, are not the ſame thing; though one ariſes from the other.

Perſons may be greatly to blame for doubting of their ſtate, on ſuch grounds as theſe laſt mentioned; and they may be to blame, that they have no more grace, and no more of the preſent exerciſes and experiences of it, to be an evidence to them of the goodneſs of their ſtate: men are doubtleſs to blame for being in a dead carnal frame; but when they are in ſuch a frame, and have no ſenſible experience of the exerciſes of grace, but on the contrary, are very much under the prevalence of their luſts, and an unchriſtian ſpirit, they are not to blame for doubting of their ſtate. It is as impoſſible, in the nature of things, that a holy and Chriſtian hope, ſhould be kept alive, in its clearneſs and ſtrength, in ſuch circumſtances, as it is to keep the light in the room, when the candle is put out; or to maintain the bright ſun-ſhine in the air, when the ſun is gone down. Diſtant experiences, when darkened by preſent prevailing luſt and corruption, will never keep alive a gracious confidence and aſſurance; but that ſickens and decays upon it, as neceſſarily as a little child by repeated blows on the head with a hammer. Nor is it at all to be lamented, that perſons doubt of their ſtate in ſuch circumſtances; but on the contrary, it is deſirable and every way beſt that they ſhould. It is agreeable to that wiſe and merciful conſtitution of things, which God hath eſtabliſhed, that it ſhould be ſo. For ſo hath God contrived and conſtituted things, in his diſpenſations towards his own people, that when their *love* decays, and the exerciſes of it fail, or become weak, *fear* ſhould ariſe; for then they need it to reſtrain them from ſin, and to excite them to care for the good of their ſouls, and ſo to ſtir them up to watchfulneſs and diligence in religion: but God hath ſo ordered that when love riſes, and is in vigorous exerciſe, then fear ſhould vaniſh, and be driven away; for then they need it not, having a higher and more excellent principle in exerciſe, to reſtrain them from ſin, and ſtir them up to their duty. There are no other principles, which human nature is under the influence of, that will ever make

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men conſcientious; but one of theſe two, *fear* or *love*: and therefore, if one of theſe ſhould not prevail as the other decayed, God's people when fallen into dead and carnal frames, when love is aſleep, would be lamentably expoſed indeed. And therefore God has wiſely ordained, that theſe two oppoſite principles of love and fear, ſhould riſe and fall, like the two oppoſite ſcales of a balance; when one riſes, the other ſinks. As light and darkneſs neceſſarily and unavoidably ſucceed each other; if light prevails, ſo much does darkneſs ceaſe, and no more; and if light decays, ſo much does darkneſs prevail: ſo it is in the heart of a child of God; if divine love decays and falls aſleep, and luſt prevails, the light and joy of hope goes out, and dark fear and doubting ariſes; and if on the contrary, divine love prevails, and comes into lively exerciſe, this brings in the brightneſs of hope, and drives away black luſt, and fear with it. Love is the *ſpirit of adoption*, or the childlike principle; if that ſlumbers, men fall under fear, which is the *ſpirit of bondage*, or the ſervile principle: and ſo on the contrary. And if it be ſo, that love, or the ſpirit of adoption, be carried to a great height, it quite drives away all fear, and gives full aſſurance; agreeable to that of the apoſtle, 1 John iv. 18. "There "is no fear in love, but perfect love caſts out fear" Theſe two oppoſite principles of luſt and holy love, bring hope and fear into the hearts of God's children, in proportion as they prevail; that is, when left to their own natural influence, without ſomething adventitious, or accidental intervening; as the diſtemper of melancholy, doctrinal ignorance, prejudices of education, wrong inſtruction, falſe principles, peculiar temptations, *&c.*

Fear is caſt out by the Spirit of God, no other way than by the prevailing of love: nor is it ever maintained by his Spirit, but when love is aſleep. At ſuch a time, in vain is all the ſaint's ſelf-examinations, and poring on paſt experience, in order to eſtabliſh his peace, and get aſſurance. For it is contrary to the nature of things, as God hath conſtituted them, that he ſhould have aſſurance at ſuch a time.

They therefore do directly thwart God's wiſe and gracious conſtitution of things, who exhort others to be confident in their hope, when in dead frames; under a notion of *living by faith*, and *not by ſight*, and *truſting God in the dark*, and *living upon Chriſt, and not upon experiences*; and warn them not to doubt of their good eſtate, leſt they ſhould be guilty of the

dreadful

dreadful ſin of unbelief. And it has a direct tendency to eſtabliſh the moſt preſumptuous hypocrites, and to prevent their ever calling their ſtate in queſtion, how much ſoever wickedneſs rages, and reigns in their hearts, and prevails in their lives; under a notion of honouring God, by *hoping againſt hope*, and confidently truſting in God, when things look very dark. And doubtleſs vaſt has been the miſchief that has been done this way.

Perſons cannot be ſaid to forſake Chriſt, and live on their experiences of the exerciſes of grace, merely becauſe they take them and uſe them as evidences of grace; for there are no other evidences that they can or ought to take. But then may perſons be ſaid to live upon their experiences, when they make a righteouſneſs of them; and inſtead of keeping their eye on God's glory, and Chriſt's excellency, they turn their eyes off theſe objects without them, on to themſelves, to entertain their minds, by viewing their own attainments, and high experiences, and the great things they have met with, and are bright and beautiful in their own eyes, and are rich and increaſed with goods in their own apprehenſions, and think that God has as admiring an eſteem of them, on the ſame account, as they have of themſelves: this is living on experiences, and not on Chriſt; and is more abominable in the ſight of God, than the groſs immoralities of thoſe who make no pretences to religion. But this is a far different thing from a mere improving experiences as evidences of an intereſt in a glorious Redeemer.

But to return from this digreſſion, I would mention one thing more under the general head that I am upon.

XII. Nothing can be certainly concluded concerning the nature of religious affections, that any are the ſubjects of, from this, that the outward manifeſtations of them, and the relation perſons give of them, are very affecting and pleaſing to the truly godly, and ſuch as greatly gain their charity, and win their hearts.

The true ſaints have not ſuch a ſpirit of diſcerning, that they can certainly determine who are godly, and who are not. For though they know experimentally what true religion is, in the internal exerciſes of it; yet theſe are what they can neither

feel,

feel, nor ſee, in the heart of another.* There is nothing in others, that comes within their view, but outward manifeſtations and appearances: but the ſcripture plainly intimates, that this way of judging what is in men by outward appearances, is at beſt uncertain, and liable to deceit; 1 Sam. xvi. 7. "The Lord "ſeeth not as man ſeeth; for man looketh on the outward ap- "pearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Iſ. xi. 3. "He ſhall not judge after the ſight of his eyes, neither reprove "after the hearing of his ears."† They commonly are but poor judges, and dangerous counſellors in ſoul caſes, who are quick and peremptory in determining perſons ſtates, vaunting themſelves in their extraordinary faculty of diſcerning and diſtinguiſhing, in theſe great affairs; as though all was open and clear to them. They betray one of theſe three things; either that they have had but little experience; or are perſons of a weak judgment; or that they have a great degree of pride and ſelf-confidence, and ſo ignorance of themſelves. Wiſe and experienced men will proceed with great caution in ſuch an affair.

When there are many probable appearances of piety in others, it is the duty of the ſaints to receive them cordially into their charity, and to love them and rejoice in them, as their brethren in Chriſt Jeſus. But yet the beſt of men may be deceived, when the appearances ſeem to them exceeding fair and bright, even ſo as entirely to gain their charity, and conquer their hearts.

* "Men may have the knowlege of their own converſion: the "knowlege that other men have of it is uncertain; becauſe no man "can look into the heart of another, and ſee the workings of grace "there." *Stoddard's nature of ſaving converſion*, chap. xv. at the beginning.

† Mr. Stoddard obſerves, That "all viſible ſigns are common to "converted and unconverted men; and a relation of experiences, "among the reſt." *Appeal to the learned*, p. 75.

"O how hard is it for the eye of man to diſcern betwixt chaff and "wheat! and how many upright hearts are now cenſured, whom "God will clear! how many falſe hearts are now approved, whom "God will condemn! Men ordinarily have no convictive proofs, "but only probable ſymptoms; which at moſt beget but a conjec- "tural knowlege of another's ſtate. And they that ſhall perempto- "rily judge either way, may poſſibly wrong the generation of the "upright, or on the other ſide, abſolve and juſtify the wicked. And "truly conſidering what hath been ſaid, it is no wonder that dange- "rous miſtakes are ſo frequently made in this matter." *Flavel's huſbandry ſpiritualized*, chap. xii.

It has been a common thing in the church of God, for ſuch bright profeſſors, that are received as eminent ſaints, among the ſaints, to fall away and come to nothing.* And this we need not wonder at, if we conſider the things that have been already obſerved: what things it has been ſhown, may appear in men who are altogether graceleſs. Nothing hinders but that all theſe things may meet together in men, and yet they be without a ſpark of grace in their hearts. They may have religious affections of many kinds together; they may have a ſort of affection towards God, that bears a great reſemblance ofdear love to him; and ſo a kind of love to the brethren, and great appearances of admiration of God's perfections and works, and ſorrow for ſin, and reverence, ſubmiſſion, ſelf-abaſement, gratitude, joy, religious longings, and zeal for the intereſt of religion and the good of ſouls. And theſe affections may come after great awakenings and convictions of conſcience; and there may be great appearances of a work of humiliation; and counterfeit love and joy, and other affections may ſeem to follow theſe, and one another, juſt in the ſame order, that is commonly obſervable in the holy affections of true converts. And theſe religious affections may be carried to a great height, and may cauſe abundance of tears, yea, may overcome the nature of thoſe who are the ſubjects of them, and may make them affectionate, and fervent, and fluent in ſpeaking of the things of God, and diſpoſe them to be abundant in it; and may be attended with many ſweet texts of ſcripture, and precious promiſes, brought with great impreſſion on their

* "Be not offended, if you ſee great cedars fall, ſtars fall from "heaven, great profeſſors die and decay: do not think they be all "ſuch: do not think that the elect ſhall fall. Truly, ſome are ſuch "that when they fall, one would think a man truly ſanctified might "fall away, as the Arminians think: 1 John ii. 19. "They were "not of us." I ſpeak this, becauſe the Lord is ſhaking; and I "look for great apoſtaſies: for God is trying all his friends, through "all the Chriſtian world. In Germany what profeſſion was there! "who would have thought it? The Lord who delights to manifeſt "that openly, which was hid ſecretly, ſends a ſword and they fall." *Shepard's Parab.* Part I. p. 118, 119.

"The ſaints may approve thee, and God condemn thee; Rev. "iii. 1 "Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, and art dead." Men "may ſay, There is a true Nathanael; and God may ſay, There is a "ſelf-cozening Phariſee. Reader, Thou haſt heard of Judas and "Demas, of Ananias and Sapphira, of Hymeneus and Philetus, once "renowned and famous profeſſors, and thou haſt heard how they "proved at laſt." *Flavel's Touchſtone of Sincerity*, chap. ii. ſect. 5.

their minds; and may diſpoſe them with their mouths to praiſe and glorify God, in a very ardent manner, and fervently to call upon others to praiſe him, crying out of their unworthineſs, and extolling free grace. And may, moreover, diſpoſe them to abound in the external duties of religion, ſuch as prayer, hearing the word preached, ſinging, and religious conference; and theſe things attended with a great reſemblance of a Chriſtian aſſurance, in its greateſt height, when the ſaints mount on eagles wings, above all darkneſs and doubting. I think it has been made plain, that there may be all theſe things, and yet there be nothing more than the common influences of the Spirit of God, joined with the deluſions of Satan, and the wicked and deceitful heart. To which I may add, that all theſe things may be attended with a ſweet natural temper, and a good doctrinal knowlege of religion, and a long acquaintance with the ſaints way of talking and of expreſſing their affections and experiences, and a natural ability and ſubtilty in accommodating their expreſſions and manner of ſpeaking to the diſpoſitions and notions of the hearers, and a taking decency of expreſſion and behaviour, formed by a good education. How great therefore may the reſemblance be, as to all outward expreſſions and appearances, between an hypocrite and a true ſaint! Doubtleſs it is the glorious prerogative of the omniſcient God, as the great ſearcher of hearts, to be able well to ſeparate between ſheep and goats. And what an indecent, ſelf-exaltation, and arrogance is it, in poor fallible dark mortals, to pretend that they can determine and know, who are really ſincere and upright before God, and who are not!

Many ſeem to lay great weight on that, and to ſuppoſe it to be what may determine them with reſpect to others real piety, when they not only tell a plauſible ſtory, but when, in giving an account of their experiences, they make ſuch a repreſentation, and ſpeak after ſuch a manner, that they *feel* their talk; that is to ſay, when their talk ſeems to harmonize with their own experience, and their hearts are touched and affected and delighted, by what they hear them ſay, and drawn out by it, in dear love to them. But there is not that certainty in ſuch things, and that full dependence to be had upon them, which many imagine. A true ſaint greatly delights in holineſs; it is a moſt beautiful thing in his eyes; and God's work, in ſavingly renewing and making holy and happy, a poor, and before periſhing ſoul, appears to him a moſt glorious work: no wonder therefore, that his heart is touched, and greatly affected, when he hears another give a probable account of this work,

wrought

wrought on his own heart, and when he ſees in him probable appearances of holineſs; whether thoſe pleaſing appearances have any thing real to anſwer them, or no. And if he uſes the ſame words, which are commonly made uſe of, to expreſs the affections of true ſaints, and tells of many things following one another in an order, agreeable to the method of the experience of him that hears him, and alſo ſpeaks freely and boldly, and with an air of aſſurance; no wonder that the other thinks his experiences harmonize with his own. And if beſides all this, in giving his relation, he ſpeaks with much affection; and above all, if in ſpeaking, he ſeems to ſhew much affection to him to whom he ſpeaks, ſuch an affection as the Galatians did to the apoſtle Paul; theſe things will naturally have a powerful influence, to affect and draw his hearer's heart, and open wide the doors of his charity towards him. David ſpeaks as one who had felt Ahithophel's talk, and had once a ſweet ſavour and reliſh of it. And therefore exceeding great was his ſurpriſe and diſappointment, when he fell; it was almoſt too much for him. Pſal. lv. 12, 13, 14. "It was not an "enemy—then I could have borne it;—but it was thou, a man, "mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance: we took "ſweet counſel together, and walked unto the houſe of God "in company."

It is with profeſſors of religion, eſpecially ſuch as become ſo in a time of outpouring of the Spirit of God, as it is with the bloſſoms in the ſpring;* there are vaſt numbers of them upon the trees, which all look fair and promiſing; but yet very many of them never come to any thing. And many of thoſe, that in a little time wither up, and drop off, and rot under the trees; yet for a while, look as beautiful and gay as others; and not only ſo, but ſmell ſweet, and ſend forth a pleaſant odour; ſo that we cannot, by any of our ſenſes, certainly diſtinguiſh thoſe bloſſoms which have in them that ſecret virtue, which will afterwards appear in the fruit, and that inward ſolidity and ſtrength which ſhall enable them to bear, and cauſe them to be perfected by the hot ſummer ſun, that will dry up the others. It is the mature fruit which comes afterwards, and not

* A time of outpouring of the Spirit of God, reviving religion, and producing the pleaſant appearances of it, in new converts, is in ſcripture compared to this very thing, *viz.* the ſpring ſeaſon, when the benign influences of the heavens cauſe the bloſſoms to put forth. Cant. ii. 11, 12.

not the beautiful colours and ſmell of the bloſſom, that we muſt judge by. So new converts, (profeſſedly ſo,) in their talk about things of religion, may appear fair, and be very ſavoury, and the ſaints may think they talk feelingly. They may reliſh their talk, and imagine they perceive a divine ſavour in it; and yet all may come to nothing.

It is ſtrange how hardly men are brought to be contented with the rules and directions Chriſt has given them, but they muſt needs go by other rules of their own inventing, that ſeem to them wiſer and better. I know of no directions or counſels which Chriſt ever delivered more plainly, than the rules he has given us, to guide us in our judging of others ſincerity; *viz.* that we ſhould judge of the tree chiefly by the fruit: but yet this will not do; but other ways are found out, which are imagined to be more diſtinguiſhing and certain. And woful have been the miſchievous conſequences, of this arrogant ſetting up mens wiſdom above the wiſdom of Chriſt. I believe many ſaints have gone much out of the way of Chriſt's word, in this reſpect: and ſome of them have been chaſtiſed with whips, and (I had almoſt ſaid) ſcorpions, to bring them back again. But many things which have lately appeared, and do now appear, may convince, that ordinarily, thoſe who have gone fartheſt this way, that have been moſt highly conceited of their faculty of diſcerning, and have appeared moſt forward, peremptorily and ſuddenly to determine the ſtate of mens ſouls, have been hypocrites, who have known nothing of true religion.

In the parable of the wheat and tares, it is ſaid, Matth. xiii. 26. "When the blade was ſprung up, and brought forth fruit, "then appeared the tares alſo." As though the tares were not diſcerned, nor diſtinguiſhable from the wheat, *until then*, as Mr. Flavel obſerves;† who mentions it as an obſervation of Jerome's, that *wheat and tares are ſo much alike, until the blade of the wheat comes to bring forth the ear, that it is next to impoſſible to diſtinguiſh them.* And then, Mr. Flavel adds, "How difficult ſo ever it be to diſcern the difference between "wheat and tares; yet doubtleſs the eye of ſenſe can much "eaſier diſcriminate them, than the moſt quick and piercing "eye of man, can diſcern the difference between ſpecial and "common grace. For all ſaving graces in the ſaints, have

"their

† Huſbandry ſpiritualized, Chap. xii.

" their counterfeits in hypocrites ; there are ſimilar works in
" thoſe, which a ſpiritual and very judicious eye may eaſily miſ-
" take, for the ſaving and genuine effects of a ſanctifying ſpirit."

As it is the ear or the fruit which diſtinguiſhes the wheat from the tares, ſo this is the true Shibboleth, that he who ſtands as judge at the paſſages of Jordan, makes uſe of to diſtinguiſh thoſe that ſhall paſs over Jordan into the true Canaan, from thoſe that ſhould be ſlain at the paſſages. For the Hebrew word Shibboleth, ſignifies an ear of corn. And perhaps the more full pronunciation of Jephthah's friends, Shibboleth, may repreſent a full ear with fruit in it, typifying the fruits of the friends of Chriſt, the antitype of Jephthah ; and the more lean pronunciation of the Ephraimites his enemies, may repreſent their empty ears, typifying the ſhow of religion in hypocrites, without ſubſtance and fruit. This is agreeable to the doctrine we are abundantly taught in ſcripture, *viz.* That he who is ſet to judge thoſe that paſs through death, whether they have a right to enter into the heavenly Canaan or no, or whether they ſhould not be ſlain, will judge every man according to his works.

We ſeem to be taught the ſame things, by the rules given for the prieſt's diſcerning the leproſy. In many caſes it was impoſſible for the prieſt to determine whether a man had the leproſy, or whether he were clean, by the moſt narrow inſpection of the appearances that were upon him, until he had waited to ſee what the appearances would come to, and had ſhut up the perſon who ſhewed himſelf to him, one ſeven days after another ; and when he judged, he was to determine by the hair, which grew out of the ſpot that was ſhewed him, which was as it were the fruit that it brought forth.

And here, before I finiſh what I have to ſay under this head, I would ſay ſomething to a ſtrange notion ſome have of late been led away with, of certainly knowing the good eſtate that others are in, as though it were immediately revealed to them from heaven, by their love flowing out to them in an extraordinary manner. They argue thus, that their love being very ſenſible and great, it may be certainly known by them who feel it, to be a true Chriſtian love : and if it be a true Chriſtian love, the Spirit of God muſt be the author of it : and inaſmuch as the Spirit of God, who knows certainly, whether others are the children of God or no, and is a ſpirit of truth, is pleaſed, by an uncommon influence upon them, to cauſe their love to

flow

flow out, in an extraordinary manner, towards ſuch a perſon, as a child of God; it muſt needs be that this infallible Spirit, who deceives none, knows that that perſon is a child of God. But ſuch perſons might be convinced of the falſeneſs of their reaſoning, if they would conſider whether or no it be not their duty, and what God requires of them, to love thoſe as the children of God, who they think are the children of God, and whom they have no reaſon to think otherwiſe of, from all that they can ſee in them, though God, who ſearches the hearts, knows them not to be his children. If it be their duty, then it is good, and the want of it ſin; and therefore, ſurely, the Spirit of God may be the author of it: the Spirit of God, without being a ſpirit of falſehood, may in ſuch a caſe aſſiſt a perſon to do his duty, and keep him from ſin. But then they argue from the uncommon degree and ſpecial manner, in which their love flows out to the perſon; which they think the Spirit of God never would cauſe, if he did not know the object to be a child of God. But then I would aſk them, whether or no it is not their duty to love all ſuch as they are bound to think are the children of God, from all that they can ſee in them, to a very great degree, though God, from other things which he ſees, that are out of ſight to them, knows them not to be ſo. It is mens duty to love all whom they are bound in charity to look upon as the children of God, with a vaſtly dearer affection than they commonly do. As we ought to love Chriſt to the utmoſt capacity of our nature, ſo it is our duty to love thoſe who we think are ſo near and dear to him as his members, with an exceeding dear affection, as Chriſt has loved us; and therefore it is ſin in us not to love them ſo. We ought to pray to God that he would by his Spirit keep us from ſin, and enable us to do our duty: and may not his Spirit anſwer our prayers, and enable us to do our duty, in a particular inſtance, without lying? If he cannot, then the Spirit of God is bound not to help his people to do their duty in ſome inſtances, becauſe he cannot do it without being a ſpirit of falſehood. But ſurely God is ſo ſovereign as that comes to, that he may enable us to do our duty when he pleaſes, and on what occaſion he pleaſes. When perſons think others are his children, God may have other ends in cauſing their exceedingly endeared love to flow out to them, beſides revealing to them whether their opinion of them be right or no: he may have that merciful end in it, to enable them to do their duty, and to keep them

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from that dreadful infinite evil, ſin. And will they ſay God ſhall not ſhow them that mercy in ſuch a caſe? If I am at a diſtance from home, and hear, that in my abſence, my houſe is burnt, but my family have, in ſome extraordinary manner, all eſcaped the flames; and every thing in the circumſtances of the ſtory, as I hear it, makes it appear very credible; it would be ſin in me, in ſuch a caſe, not to feel a very great degree of gratitude to God, though the ſtory indeed be not true. And is not God ſo ſovereign, that he may if he pleaſes, ſhew me that mercy on that occaſion, and enable me to do my duty in a much further degree than I uſed to do it, and yet not incur the charge of deceitfulneſs, in confirming a falſehood?

It is exceeding manifeſt, that error or miſtake may be the occaſion of a gracious exerciſe, and conſequently a gracious influence of the Spirit of God, by Rom. xiv. 6. "He that eateth "to the Lord, he eateth, and giveth God thanks; and he that "eateth not to the Lord, he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." The apoſtle is ſpeaking of thoſe, who through erroneous and needleſs ſcruples, avoided eating legally unclean meats.—By this it is very evident, that there may be true exerciſes of grace, a true reſpect *to the Lord*, and particularly, a true thankfulneſs, which may be occaſioned, both by an erroneous judgment and practice. And conſequently, an error may be the occaſion of thoſe truly holy exerciſes that are from the infallible Spirit of God. And if ſo, it is certainly too much for us to determine, to how great a degree the Spirit of God may give this holy exerciſe, on ſuch an occaſion.

This notion, of certainly diſcerning another's ſtate, by love flowing out, is not only not founded on reaſon or ſcripture, but it is anti-ſcriptural, it is againſt the rules of ſcripture; which ſay not a word of any ſuch way of judging the ſtate of others as this, but direct us to judge chiefly by the fruits that are ſeen in them. And it is againſt the doctrines of ſcripture, which do plainly teach us, that the ſtate of others ſouls towards God, cannot be known by us, as in Rev. ii. 17. "To him that over-"cometh will I give to eat of the *hidden manna*, and I will "give him a white ſtone, and in the ſtone a new name writ-"ten, which *no man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it.*" And Rom. ii. 29. "He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and cir-"cumciſion is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, and not in the "letter, whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God." That by this

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laſt expreſſion, *whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God*, the apoſtle has reſpect to the inſufficiency of men to judge concerning him, whether he be inwardly a Jew or no, (as they could eaſily ſee by outward marks, whether men were outwardly Jews,) and would ſignify, that it belongs to God alone to give a determining voice in this matter, is confirmed by the ſame apoſtle's uſe of the phraſe, in 1 Cor. iv. 5. "Therefore judge nothing be-" fore the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to " light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt " the counſels of the hearts:" and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God. The apoſtle, in the two foregoing verſes, ſays, " But with me it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould be judged " of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own " ſelf. For I know nothing by myſelf, yet am I not hereby " juſtified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord." And again, it is further confirmed, becauſe the apoſtle in this ſecond chapter to the Romans, directs his ſpeech eſpecially to thoſe who had a high conceit of their own holineſs, made their boaſt of God, and were confident of their own diſcerning, and that they knew God's will, and approved the things which were excellent, or tried the things that differ (as it is in the margin.) verſ. 19. " And were confident that they were guides of the " blind, and a light to them which are in darkneſs, inſtruc-" tors of the fooliſh, teachers of babes;" and ſo took upon them to judge others. See verſ. 1. and 17, 18, 19, 20.

And how arrogant muſt the notion be, that they have, who imagine they can certainly know others godlineſs, when that great apoſtle Peter pretends not to ſay any more concerning Sylvanus, than that he was " a faithful brother, as he ſuppoſ-" ed?" 1 Pet. v. 12. Though this Sylvanus appears to have been a very eminent miniſter of Chriſt, and an evangeliſt, and a famous light in God's church at that day, and an intimate companion of the apoſtles. See 2 Cor. i. 19. 1 Theſſ. i. 1. and 2 Theſſ. i. 1.

PART III.

Shewing what are diſtinguiſhing Signs of truly gracious and holy Affections.

I Come now to the SECOND thing appertaining to the *trial* of religious affections, which was propoſed, *viz.* To take notice of ſome things, wherein thoſe affections that are ſpiritual and gracious, do differ from thoſe that are not ſo.

But before I proceed directly to the diſtinguiſhing characters, I would previouſly mention ſome things which I deſire may be obſerved, concerning the marks I ſhall lay down.

1. That I am far from undertaking to give ſuch ſigns of gracious affections, as ſhall be ſufficient to enable any certainly to diſtinguiſh true affection from falſe in others; or to determine poſitively which of their neighbours are true profeſſors, and which are hypocrites. In ſo doing, I ſhould be guilty of that arrogance which I have been condemning. Though it be plain that Chriſt has given rules to all Chriſtians, to enable them to judge of profeſſors of religion, whom they are concerned with, ſo far as is neceſſary for their own ſafety, and to prevent their being led into a ſnare by falſe teachers, and falſe pretenders to religion; and though it be alſo beyond doubt, that the ſcriptures do abound with rules, which may be very ſerviceable to miniſters, in counſelling and conducting ſouls committed to their care in things appertaining to their ſpiritual and eternal ſtate; yet, it is alſo evident, that it was never God's deſign to give us any rules, by which we may certainly know, who of our fellow-profeſſors are his, and to make a full and clear ſeparation between ſheep and goats: but that on the contrary, it was God's deſign to reſerve this to himſelf, as his prerogative. And therefore no ſuch diſtinguiſhing ſigns as ſhall enable Chriſtians or miniſters to do this, are ever to be expected to the world's end: for no more is ever to be expected from any ſigns, that are to be found in the word of God, or gathered from it, than Chriſt deſigned them for.

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2. No ſuch ſigns are to be expected, that ſhall be ſufficient to enable thoſe ſaints certainly to diſcern their own good eſtate, who are very low in grace, or are ſuch as have much departed from God, and are fallen into a dead, carnal and unchriſtian frame. It is not agreeable to God's deſign, (as has been already obſerved,) that ſuch ſhould know their good eſtate: nor is it deſirable that they ſhould; but, on the contrary, every way beſt that they ſhould not; and we have reaſon to bleſs God, that he has made no proviſion that ſuch ſhould certainly know the ſtate that they are in, any other way, than by firſt coming out of the ill frame and way they are in.

Indeed it is not properly through the defect of the ſigns given in the word of God, that every ſaint living, whether ſtrong or weak, and thoſe who are in a bad frame, as well as others, cannot certainly know their good eſtate by them. For the rules in themſelves are certain and infallible, and every ſaint has, or has had thoſe things in himſelf, which are ſure evidences of grace; for *every*, even the *leaſt* act of grace is ſo. But it is through his defect to whom the ſigns are given. There is a twofold defect in that ſaint who is very low in grace, or in an ill frame, which makes it impoſſible for him to know certainly that he has true grace, by the beſt ſigns and rules which can be given him.

Firſt, A defect in the *object*, or the qualification to be viewed and examined. I do not mean an eſſential defect; becauſe I ſuppoſe the perſon to be a real ſaint; but a defect in degree: grace being very ſmall, cannot be clearly and certainly diſcerned and diſtinguiſhed. Things that are very ſmall, we cannot clearly diſcern their form, or diſtinguiſh them one from another; though, as they are in themſelves, their form may be very different. There is doubtleſs a great difference between the body of man, and the bodies of other animals, in the firſt conception in the womb: but yet if we ſhould view the different embryos, it might not be poſſible for us to diſcern the difference, by reaſon of the imperfect ſtate of the object; but as it comes to greater perfection, the difference becomes very plain. The difference between creatures of very contrary qualities, is not ſo plainly to be ſeen while they are very young, even after they are actually brought forth, as in their more perfect ſtate. The difference between doves and ravens, or doves and vultures, when they firſt come out of the egg, is not

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ſo evident ; but as they grow to their perfection, it is exceeding great and manifeſt. Another defect attending the grace of thoſe I am ſpeaking, is its being mingled with ſo much corruption, which clouds and hides it, and makes it impoſſible for it certainly to be known. Though different things that are before us, may have in themſelves many marks thoroughly diſtinguiſhing them one from another ; yet if we ſee them only in a thick ſmoke, it may nevertheleſs be impoſſible to diſtinguiſh them. A fixed ſtar is eaſily diſtinguiſhable from a comet, in a clear ſky ; but if we view them through a cloud, it may be impoſſible to ſee the difference. When true Chriſtians are in an ill frame, guilt lies on the conſcience ; which will bring fear, and ſo prevent the peace and joy of an aſſured hope.

Secondly, There is in ſuch a caſe a defect in the *eye*. As the feebleneſs of grace and prevalence of corruption, obſcures the object ; ſo it enfeebles the ſight ; it darkens the ſight as to all ſpiritual objects, of which grace is one. Sin is like ſome diſtempers of the eyes, that make things to appear of different colours from thoſe which properly belong to them, and like many other diſtempers, that put the mouth out of taſte, ſo as to diſenable from diſtinguiſhing good and wholeſome food from bad, but every thing taſtes bitter. Men in a corrupt and carnal frame, have their ſpiritual ſenſes in but poor plight for judging and diſtinguiſhing ſpiritual things.

For theſe reaſons, no ſigns that can be given, will actually ſatisfy perſons in ſuch a caſe : let the ſigns that are given, be never ſo good and infallible, and clearly laid down, they will not ſerve them. It is like giving a man rules, how to diſtinguiſh viſible objects in the dark : the things themſelves may be very different, and their difference may be very well and diſtinctly deſcribed to him ; yet all is inſufficient to enable him to diſtinguiſh them, becauſe he is in the dark. And therefore many perſons in ſuch a caſe ſpend time in a fruitleſs labour, in poring on paſt experiences, and examining themſelves by ſigns they hear laid down from the pulpit, or that they read in books ; when there is other work for them to do, that is much more expected of them ; which, while they neglect, all their ſelf-examinations are like to be in vain, if they ſhould ſpend never ſo much time in them. The accurſed thing is to be deſtroyed from their camp, and Achan to be ſlain ; and until this be done they will be in trouble. It is not God's deſign

that

that men ſhould obtain aſſurance in any other way, than by mortifying corruption, and increaſing in grace, and obtaining the lively exerciſes of it. And although ſelf-examination be a duty of great uſe and importance, and by no means to be neglected; yet it is not the principal means, by which the ſaints do get ſatisfaction of their good eſtate. Aſſurance is not to be obtained ſo much by *ſelf-examination*, as by *action*. The apoſtle Paul fought aſſurance chiefly this way, even by *forgetting the things that were behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things that were before, preſſing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus; if by any means he might attain unto the reſurrection of the dead.* And it was by this means chiefly that he obtained aſſurance, 1 Cor. ix. 26. "I "therefore ſo run, as not uncertainly." He obtained aſſurance of winning the prize, more by *running*, than by *conſidering*. The *ſwiftneſs of his pace*, did more towards his aſſurance of a conqueſt, than the *ſtrictneſs of his examination*. Giving all diligence to grow in grace, by adding to faith, virtue, &c. is the direction that the apoſtle Peter gives us, for *making our calling and election ſure*, and having *an entrance miniſtered to us abundantly, into Chriſt's everlaſting kingdom*; ſignifying to us, that without this, our eyes will be dim, and we ſhall be as men in the dark, that cannot plainly ſee things paſt or to come, either the forgiveneſs of our ſins paſt, or our heavenly inheritance that is future, and *far off*, 2 Pet. i. 5—11.‡

Therefore, though good rules to diſtinguiſh true grace from counterfeit, may tend to convince hypocrites, and be of great uſe to the ſaints, in many reſpects; and among other benefits may be very uſeful to them to remove many needleſs ſcruples, and eſtabliſh their hope; yet I am far from pretending to lay down any ſuch rules, as ſhall be ſufficient of themſelves, without other means, to enable all true ſaints to ſee their good eſtate, or as ſuppoſing they ſhould be the principal means of their ſatisfaction.

3. Nor

‡ "The way to know your godlineſs, is to renew the viſible exerciſes of grace."—"The more the viſible exerciſes of grace are "renewed, the more certain you will be. The more frequently "theſe actings are renewed, the more abiding and confirmed your "aſſurance will be."—"The more mens grace is multiplied, the "more their peace is multiplied; 2 Pet. i. 2. *Grace and peace be mul-* "*tiplied unto you, through the knowlege of God and Jeſus Chriſt our* "*Lord.*" *Stoddard's Way to know ſincerity and hypocriſy*, p. 139. and 142.

3. Nor is there much encouragement, in the experience of preſent or paſt times, to lay down rules or marks to diſtinguiſh between true and falſe affections, in hopes of convincing any conſiderable number of that ſort of hypocrites, who have been deceived with great falſe diſcoveries and affections, and are once ſettled in a falſe confidence, and high conceit of their own ſuppoſed great experiences and privileges. Such hypocrites are ſo conceited of their own wiſdom, and ſo blinded and hardened with a very great ſelf-righteouſneſs, (but very ſubtil and ſecret, under the diſguiſe of great humility,) and ſo invincible a fondneſs of their pleaſing conceit, of their great exaltation, that it uſually ſignifies nothing at all, to lay before them the moſt convincing evidences of their hypocriſy. Their ſtate is indeed deplorable, and next to thoſe that have committed the unpardonable ſin. Some of this ſort of perſons ſeem to be moſt out of the reach of means of conviction and repentance. But yet the laying down good rules may be a means of preventing ſuch hypocrites, and of convincing many of other kinds of hypocrites; and God is able to convince even this kind, and his grace is not to be limited, nor means to be neglected. And beſides, ſuch rules may be of uſe to the true ſaints, to detect falſe affections, which they may have mingled with true; and be a means of their religion's becoming more pure, and like gold tried in the fire.

Having premiſed theſe things, I now proceed directly to take notice of thoſe things in which true religious affections are diſtinguiſhed from falſe.

1. Affections that are truly ſpiritual and gracious, do ariſe from thoſe influences and operations on the heart, which are *ſpiritual*, *ſupernatural*, and *divine*.

I will explain what I mean by theſe terms, whence will appear their uſe to diſtinguiſh between thoſe affections which are ſpiritual, and thoſe which are not ſo.

We find that true ſaints, or thoſe perſons who are ſanctified by the Spirit of God, are in the New Teſtament called *ſpiritual* perſons. And their being *ſpiritual* is ſpoken of as their peculiar character, and that wherein they are diſtinguiſhed from thoſe who are not ſanctified. This is evident, becauſe thoſe who are ſpiritual are ſet in oppoſition to natural men, and carnal men. Thus the ſpiritual man and the natural man are ſet in oppoſition one to another, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. "The natural man "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fool-"iſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they

"are

" are ſpiritually diſcerned. But he that is ſpiritual, judgeth all " things." The ſcripture explains itſelf to mean an ungodly man, or one that has no grace, by a natural man: thus the apoſtle Jude, ſpeaking of certain *ungodly men*, that had crept in unawares among the ſaints, verſ. 4. of his epiſtle, ſays, verſ. 19. *Theſe are* ſenſual, *having not the Spirit.* This the apoſtle gives as a reaſon why they behaved themſelves in ſuch a wicked manner as he had deſcribed. Here the word tranſlated *ſenſual*, in the original is *natural*; which is the very ſame, which in thoſe verſes in 1 Cor. chap. ii. is tranſlated *natural.* In the like manner, in the continuation of the ſame diſcourſe, in the next verſe but one, *ſpiritual men* are oppoſed to *carnal men*; which the connection plainly ſhews mean the ſame, as *ſpiritual men* and *natural men*, in the foregoing verſes; *And I, brethren, could not ſpeak unto you, as unto* ſpiritual, *but as unto* carnal; *i. e.* as in a great meaſure unſanctified. That by *carnal* the apoſtle means corrupt and unſanctified, is abundantly evident, by Rom. vii. 25. and viii. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13. Gal. v. 16. to the end. Col. ii. 18. Now therefore, if by natural and carnal, in theſe texts, be intended *unſanctified*, then doubtleſs by ſpiritual, which is oppoſed thereto, is meant *ſanctified* and gracious.

And as the ſaints are called ſpiritual in ſcripture, ſo we alſo find that there are certain properties, qualities, and principles, that have the ſame epithet given them. So we read of a *ſpiritual mind*, Rom. viii. 6, 7. and of *ſpiritual wiſdom*, Col. i. 9. and of *ſpiritual bleſſings*, Eph. i. 3.

Now it may be obſerved, that the epithet *ſpiritual*, in theſe and other parallel texts of the New Teſtament, is not uſed to ſignify any relation of perſons or things to the ſpirit or ſoul of man, as the ſpiritual part of man, in oppoſition to the body, which is the material part. Qualities are not ſaid to be ſpiritual, becauſe they have their ſeat in the ſoul, and not in the body: for there are ſome properties that the ſcripture calls *carnal* or *fleſhly*, which have their ſeat as much in the ſoul, as thoſe properties that are called *ſpiritual.* Thus it is with pride and ſelf-righteouſneſs, and a man's truſting to his own wiſdom, which the apoſtle calls *fleſhly*, Col. ii. 18. Nor are things called ſpiritual, becauſe they are converſant about thoſe things that are immaterial, and not corporeal. For ſo was the wiſdom of the wiſe men, and princes of this world, converſant about ſpirits, and immaterial beings; which yet the apoſtle ſpeaks of as *natural men*, totally ignorant of thoſe things that are *ſpiritual*,

1 Cor.

1 Cor. chap. ii. But it is with relation to the *Holy Ghoſt*, or *Spirit of God*, that perſons or things are termed ſpiritual, in the New Teſtament. *Spirit*, as the word is uſed to ſignify the third perſon in the Trinity, is the ſubſtantive, of which is formed the adjective *ſpiritual*, in the holy ſcriptures. Thus Chriſtians are called ſpiritual perſons, becauſe they are born of the Spirit, and becauſe of the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in them. And things are called ſpiritual as related to the Spirit of God; 1 Cor. ii. 13, 14. "Which "things alſo we ſpeak, not in the words which man's wiſdom "teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth; comparing "ſpiritual things with ſpiritual. But the natural man receiv-"eth not the things of the Spirit of God." Here the apoſtle himſelf expreſsly ſignifies, that by *ſpiritual things*, he means *the things of the Spirit of God*, and *things which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth*. The ſame is yet more abundantly apparent by viewing the whole context. Again, Rom. viii. 6. "To be *carnal-*"*ly minded*, is death; but to be *ſpiritually minded*, is life and "peace." The apoſtle explains what he means by being carnally and ſpiritually minded, in what follows in the 9th verſe, and ſhews that by being ſpiritually minded, he means a having the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in the heart. *But ye are not* in the fleſh, *but* in the Spirit, *if ſo be* the Spirit of God dwell in you. *Now if any man* have not the Spirit of Chriſt, *he is none of his*. The ſame is evident by all the context. But time would fail to produce all the evidence there is of this, in the New Teſtament.

And it muſt be here obſerved, that although it is with relation to the Spirit of God and his influences, that perſons and things are called ſpiritual; yet not all thoſe perſons who are ſubject to any kind of influence of the Spirit of God, are ordinarily called ſpiritual in the New Teſtament. They who have only the common influences of God's Spirit, are not ſo called, in the places cited above, but only thoſe, who have the ſpecial, gracious and ſaving influences of God's Spirit: as is evident, becauſe it has been already proved, that by ſpiritual men is meant godly men, in oppoſition to natural, carnal and unſanctified men. And it is moſt plain, that the apoſtle by *ſpiritually minded*, Rom. viii. 6. means graciouſly minded. And though the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which natural men might have, are ſometimes called ſpiritual, becauſe they are from the Spirit; yet natural men, whatever gifts of the Spirit they had,

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were not, in the uſual language of the New Teſtament, called ſpiritual perſons. For it was not by mens having the gifts of the Spirit, but by their having the virtues of the Spirit, that they were called ſpiritual; as is apparent, by Gal. vi. 1. "Bre-" thren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiri-" tual, reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs." Meekneſs is one of thoſe virtues which the apoſtle had juſt ſpoken of, in the verſes next preceding, ſhewing what are the *fruits of the Spirit*. Thoſe qualifications are ſaid to be ſpiritual in the language of the New Teſtament, which are truly gracious and holy, and peculiar to the ſaints.

Thus when we read of ſpiritual wiſdom and underſtanding, (as in Col. i. 9. *We deſire that ye may be filled with the knowlege of his will*, in all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding;) hereby is intended that wiſdom which is gracious, and from the ſanctifying influences of the Spirit of God. For doubtleſs, by *ſpiritual wiſdom*, is meant that which is oppoſite to what the ſcripture calls *natural wiſdom*; as the *ſpiritual man* is oppoſed to the *natural man*. And therefore ſpiritual wiſdom is doubtleſs the ſame with that wiſdom which is from above, that the apoſtle James ſpeaks of, Jam. iii. 17. "The " wiſdom that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, " gentle, &c." for this the apoſtle oppoſes to natural wiſdom, verſ. 15. "This wiſdom deſcendeth not from above, but is " earthly, ſenſual"—the laſt word in the original is the ſame that is tranſlated *natural*, in 1 Cor. ii. 14.

So that although natural men may be the ſubjects of many influences of the Spirit of God, as is evident by many ſcriptures, as Numb. xxiv. 2. 1 Sam. x. 10. and xi. 6. and xvi. 14. 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2, 3. Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. and many others; yet they are not in the ſenſe of the ſcripture, ſpiritual perſons; neither are any of thoſe effects, common gifts, qualities or affections, that are from the influence of the Spirit of God upon them, called ſpiritual things. The great difference lies in theſe two things.

1. The Spirit of God is given to the true ſaints to dwell in them, as his proper laſting abode; and to influence their hearts, as a principle of new nature, or as a divine ſupernatural ſpring of life and action. The ſcriptures repreſent the Holy Spirit, not only as moving, and occaſionally influencing the ſaints, but as dwelling in them as his temple, his proper abode, and everlaſting dwelling-place, 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16. John xiv.

16, 17. And he is repreſented as being there ſo united to the faculties of the ſoul, that he becomes there a principle or ſpring of new nature and life.

So the ſaints are ſaid to live by Chriſt living in them, Gal. ii. 20. Chriſt by his Spirit not only *is* in them, but *lives* in them; and ſo that they live by his life; ſo is his Spirit united to them, as a principle of life in them; they do not only drink living water, but this *living water becomes a well* or *fountain of water*, in the ſoul; *ſpringing up into* ſpiritual and *everlaſting life*, John iv. 14. and thus becomes a principle of life in them: this living water, this evangeliſt himſelf explains to intend the Spirit of God; Chap. vii. 38, 39. The light of the Sun of righteouſneſs does not only ſhine upon them, but is ſo communicated to them that they ſhine alſo, and become little images of that Sun which ſhines upon them; the ſap of the true vine is not only conveyed into them, as the ſap of a tree may be conveyed into a veſſel, but is conveyed as ſap is from a tree into one of its living branches, where it becomes a principle of life. The Spirit of God being thus communicated and united to the ſaints, they are from thence properly denominated from it, and are called *ſpiritual*.

On the other hand, though the Spirit of God may many ways influence natural men; yet becauſe it is not thus communicated to them, as an indwelling principle, they do not derive any denomination or character from it; for there being no union it is not their own. The light may ſhine upon a body that is very dark or black; and though that body be the ſubject of the light, yet, becauſe the light becomes no principle of light in it, ſo as to cauſe the body to ſhine, hence that body does not properly receive its denomination from it, ſo as to be called a *lightſome body*. So the Spirit of God acting upon the ſoul only, without communicating itſelf to be an active principle in it, cannot denominate it *ſpiritual*. A body that continues black, may be ſaid *not to have light*, though the light ſhines upon it: ſo natural men are ſaid *not to have the Spirit*, Jude 19. *ſenſual* or *natural*, (as the word is elſewhere rendered,) *having not the Spirit*.

2. Another reaſon why the ſaints and their virtues are called ſpiritual, (which is the principal thing,) is, that the Spirit of God, dwelling as a vital principle in their ſouls, there produces thoſe effects wherein he exerts and communicates himſelf in his

his own *proper nature*. Holineſs is the nature of the Spirit of God, therefore he is called in ſcripture the *Holy Ghoſt*. Holineſs, which is as it were the beauty and ſweetneſs of the divine nature, is as much the proper nature of the Holy Spirit, as heat is the nature of fire, or ſweetneſs was the nature of that holy anointing oil, which was the principal type of the Holy Ghoſt in the Moſaic diſpenſation; yea, I may rather ſay, that holineſs is as much the proper nature of the Holy Ghoſt, as ſweetneſs was the nature of the ſweet odour of that ointment. The Spirit of God ſo dwells in the hearts of the ſaints, that he there, as a ſeed or ſpring of life, exerts and communicates himſelf, in this his ſweet and divine nature, making the ſoul a partaker of God's beauty and Chriſt's joy, ſo that the ſaint has truly fellowſhip *with* the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt, in thus having the communion or participation *of* the Holy Ghoſt. The grace which is in the hearts of the ſaints, is of the ſame nature with the divine holineſs, as much as it is poſſible for that holineſs to be, which is infinitely leſs in degree; as the brightneſs that is in a diamond which the ſun ſhines upon, is of the ſame nature with the brightneſs of the ſun, but only that it is as nothing to it in degree. Therefore Chriſt ſays, John iii. 6. "That which is born of the Spirit, is ſpirit;" *i. e.* the grace that is begotten in the hearts of the ſaints, is ſomething of the ſame nature with that Spirit, and ſo is properly called a *ſpiritual nature*; after the ſame manner as that which is born of the fleſh is fleſh, or that which is born of corrupt nature is corrupt nature.

But the Spirit of God never influences the minds of natural men after this manner. Though he may influence them many ways, yet he never, in any of his influences, communicates himſelf to them in his own proper nature. Indeed he never acts diſagreeably to his nature, either on the minds of ſaints or ſinners: but the Spirit of God may act upon men agreeably to his own nature, and not exert his proper nature in the acts and exerciſes of their minds: the Spirit of God may act ſo, that his actions may be agreeable to his nature, and yet may not at all communicate himſelf in his proper nature, in the effect of that action. Thus, for inſtance, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and there was nothing diſagreeable to his nature in that action; but yet he did not at all communicate himſelf in that action, there was nothing of the proper nature of the Holy Spirit in

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that motion of the waters. And ſo he may act upon the minds of men many ways, and not communicate himſelf any more than when he acts on inanimate things.

Thus not only the manner of the *relation* of the Spirit, who is the *operator*, to the ſubject of his operations, is different; as the Spirit operates in the ſaints, as dwelling in them, as an abiding principle of action, whereas he doth not ſo operate upon ſinners; but the influence and *operation itſelf* is different, and the *effect wrought* exceeding different. So that not only the perſons are called *ſpiritual*, as having the Spirit of God dwelling in them; but thoſe qualifications, affections, and experiences that are wrought in them by the Spirit, are alſo *ſpiritual*, and therein differ vaſtly in their nature and kind from all that a natural man is or can be the ſubject of, while he remains in a natural ſtate; and alſo from all that men or devils can be the authors of. It is a ſpiritual work in this high ſenſe; and therefore above all other works is peculiar to the Spirit of God. There is no work ſo high and excellent; for there is no work wherein God doth ſo much communicate himſelf, and wherein the mere creature hath, in ſo high a ſenſe, a participation of God; ſo that it is expreſſed in ſcripture by the ſaints "being made partakers of the divine nature," 2 Pet. i. 4. and "having God dwelling in them, and they in God," 1 John iv. 12, 15, 16. and chap. iii. 21. "and having Chriſt in them," John xvii. 21. Rom. viii. 10. "being the temples of the living "God," 2 Cor. vi. 16. "living by Chriſt's life," Gal. ii. 20. "being made partakers of God's holineſs," Heb. xii. 10. "having Chriſt's love dwelling in them," John xvii. 26. "having "his joy fulfilled in them," John xvii. 13. "ſeeing light in "God's light, *and* being made to drink of the river of God's "pleaſures," Pſal. xxxvi. 8, 9. "having fellowſhip with God, "*or* communicating and partaking with him," (as the word ſignifies,) 1 John i. 3. Not that the ſaints are made partakers of the eſſence of God, and ſo are *godded* with God, and *chriſted* with Chriſt, according to the abominable and blaſphemous language and notions of ſome heretics; but, to uſe the ſcripture phraſe, they are made partakers of God's *fulneſs*, Eph. iii. 17, 18, 19. John i. 16. that is, of God's ſpiritual beauty and happineſs, according to the meaſure and capacity of a creature; for ſo it is evident the word *fulneſs* ſignifies in ſcripture-language. Grace in the hearts of the ſaints, being therefore the moſt glorious work of God, wherein he communicates of the goodneſs of his nature, it is doubtleſs his peculiar work, and

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in an eminent manner, above the power of all creatures. And the influences of the Spirit of God in this, being thus peculiar to God, and being thoſe wherein God does, in ſo high a manner, communicate himſelf, and make the creature partake of the divine nature, (the Spirit of God communicating itſelf in its own proper nature;) this is what I mean by thoſe influences that are *divine*, when I ſay that *truly gracious affections do ariſe from thoſe influences that are ſpiritual and divine.*

The true ſaints only have that which is ſpiritual; others have nothing which is divine, in the ſenſe that has been ſpoken of. They not only have not theſe communications of the Spirit of God in ſo high a *degree* as the ſaints, but have nothing of that *nature* or *kind*. For the apoſtle James tells us, that *natural* men *have not the Spirit*; and Chriſt teaches the neceſſity of a new birth, or being born of the Spirit, from this, that *he that is born of the fleſh, has* only *fleſh*, and no *ſpirit*, John iii. 6. They have not the Spirit of God dwelling in them in any degree; for the apoſtle teaches, that all who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them are ſome of his, Rom. viii. 9—11. And an having the Spirit of God is ſpoken of as a certain ſign that perſons ſhall have the eternal inheritance; for it is ſpoken of as the earneſt of it, 2 Cor. i. 22. and v. 5. Eph. i. 14. and an having any thing *of the Spirit* is mentioned as a ſure ſign of being in Chriſt, 1 John iv. 13. "Hereby know "we that we dwell in him, becauſe he hath given us *of* his Spi- "rit." Ungodly men, not only have not ſo much of the divine nature as the ſaints, but they are not *partakers of it*; which implies that they have nothing of it; for a being *partaker* of the divine nature is ſpoken of as the peculiar privilege of the true ſaints, 2 Pet. i. 4. Ungodly men are not *partakers of God's holineſs*, Heb. xii. 10. A natural man has no experience of any of thoſe things that are ſpiritual: the apoſtle teaches us that he is ſo far from it, that he knows nothing about them, he is a perfect ſtranger to them, the talk about ſuch things is all fooliſhneſs and nonſenſe to him, he knows not what it means, 1 Cor. ii. 14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the "Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs to him: neither can "he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned." And to the like purpoſe Chriſt teaches us that the world is wholly unacquainted with the Spirit of God, John xiv. 17. "Even "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, becauſe "it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him." And it is further evident, that natural men have nothing in them of the ſame

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nature with the true grace of the ſaints, becauſe the apoſtle teaches us, that thoſe of them who go fartheſt in religion, have *no charity*, or true Chriſtian love, 1 Cor. chap. xiii. So Chriſt elſewhere reproves the Phariſees, thoſe high pretenders to religion, that they *had not the love of God in them*, John v. 42. Hence natural men have no communion or fellowſhip with Chriſt, or participation with him, (as theſe words ſignify,) for this is ſpoken of as the peculiar privilege of the ſaints, 1 John i. 3. together with verſ. 6, 7. and 1 Cor. i. 8, 9. And the ſcripture ſpeaks of the actual being of a gracious principle in the ſoul, though in its firſt beginning, as a ſeed there planted, as inconſiſtent with a man's being a ſinner, 1 John iii. 9. And natural men are repreſented in ſcripture, as having no ſpiritual light, no ſpiritual life, and no ſpiritual being; and therefore converſion is often compared to opening the eyes of the blind, raiſing the dead, and a work of creation, (wherein creatures are made entirely new,) and becoming new-born children.

From theſe things it is evident, that thoſe gracious influences which the ſaints are the ſubjects of, and the effects of God's Spirit which they experience, are entirely above nature, altogether of a different kind from any thing that men find within themſelves by nature, or only in the exerciſe of natural principles; and are things which no improvement of thoſe qualifications, or principles that are natural, no advancing or exalting them to higher degrees, and no kind of compoſition of them, will ever bring men to; becauſe they not only differ from what is natural, and from every thing that natural men experience, in degree and circumſtances, but alſo in kind; and are of a nature vaſtly more excellent. And this is what I mean by *ſupernatural*, when I ſay, that *gracious affections are from thoſe influences that are ſupernatural.*

From hence it follows, that in thoſe gracious exerciſes and affections which are wrought in the minds of the ſaints, through the ſaving influences of the Spirit of God, there is a new inward *perception* or *ſenſation* of their minds, entirely different in its nature and kind, from any thing that ever their minds were the ſubjects of before they were ſanctified. For doubtleſs if God by his mighty power produces ſomething that is new, not only in degree and circumſtances, but in its whole nature, and that which could be produced by no exalting, varying, or compounding of what was there before, or by adding any thing of the like kind; I ſay, if God produces ſomething thus new in

a mind, that is a perceiving, thinking, conſcious thing; then doubtleſs ſomething entirely new is felt, or perceived, or thought; or, which is the ſame thing, there is ſome new ſenſation or perception of the mind, which is entirely of a new ſort, and which could be produced by no exalting, varying, or compounding of that kind of perceptions or ſenſations which the mind had before; or there is what ſome metaphyſicians call a new *ſimple idea*. If grace be, in the ſenſe above deſcribed, an entirely new kind of principle; then the exerciſes of it are alſo entirely a new kind of exerciſes. And if there be in the ſoul a new ſort of exerciſes which it is conſcious of, which the ſoul knew nothing of before, and which no improvement, compoſition, or management of what it was before conſcious or ſenſible of, could produce, or any thing like it; then it follows, that the mind has an entirely new kind of perception or ſenſation: and here is, as it were, a new *ſpiritual ſenſe* that the mind has, or a principle of new kind of perception or ſpiritual ſenſation, which is in its whole nature different from any former kinds of ſenſation of the mind, as taſting is diverſe from any of the other ſenſes; and ſomething is perceived by a true ſaint, in the exerciſe of this new ſenſe of mind, in ſpiritual and divine things, as entirely diverſe from any thing that is perceived in them, by natural men, as the ſweet taſte of honey is diverſe from the ideas men get of honey by only looking on it, and feeling of it. So that the ſpiritual perceptions which a ſanctified and ſpiritual perſon has, are not only diverſe from all that natural men have, after the manner that the ideas or perceptions of the ſame ſenſe may differ one from another, but rather as the ideas and ſenſations of different ſenſes do differ. Hence the work of the Spirit of God in regeneration is often in ſcripture compared to the giving a new ſenſe, giving eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, unſtopping the ears of the deaf, and opening the eyes of them that were born blind, and turning from darkneſs unto light. And becauſe this ſpiritual ſenſe is immenſely the moſt noble and excellent, and that without which all other principles of perception, and all our faculties are uſeleſs and vain; therefore the giving this new ſenſe, with the bleſſed fruits and effects of it in the ſoul, is compared to a raiſing the dead, and to a new creation.

This new ſpiritual ſenſe, and the new diſpoſitions that attend it, are no new *faculties*, but are new *principles* of nature. I uſe the word *principles*, for want of a word of a more determinate

minate ſignification. By a *principle of nature* in this place, I mean that foundation which is laid in nature, either old or new, for any particular manner or kind of exerciſe of the faculties of the ſoul; or a natural habit, or foundation for action, giving a perſon ability and diſpoſition to exert the faculties in exerciſes of ſuch a certain kind; ſo that to exert the faculties in that kind of exerciſes, may be ſaid to be his nature. So this new ſpiritual ſenſe is not a new faculty of underſtanding, but it is a new foundation laid in the nature of the ſoul, for a new kind of exerciſes of the ſame faculty of underſtanding. So that new holy diſpoſition of heart that attends this new ſenſe, is not a new faculty of will, but a foundation laid in the nature of the ſoul, for a new kind of exerciſes of the ſame faculty of will.

The Spirit of God, in all his operations upon the minds of natural men, only moves, impreſſes, aſſiſts, improves, or ſome way acts upon *natural principles*; but gives no new *ſpiritual principle*. Thus when the Spirit of God gives a natural man viſions, as he did Balaam, he only impreſſes a natural principle, *viz.* the ſenſe of ſeeing, immediately exciting ideas of that ſenſe; but he gives no new ſenſe; neither is there any thing ſupernatural, ſpiritual or divine in it. So if the Spirit of God impreſſes on a man's imagination, either in a dream, or when he is awake, any outward ideas of any of the ſenſes, either voices, or ſhapes and colours, it is only exciting ideas of the ſame kind that he has by natural principles and ſenſes. So if God reveals to any natural man, any ſecret fact; as for inſtance, ſomething that he ſhall hereafter ſee or hear; this is not infuſing or exerciſing any new ſpiritual principle, or giving the ideas of any new ſpiritual ſenſe; it is only impreſſing, in an extraordinary manner, the ideas that will hereafter be received by ſight and hearing. So in the more ordinary influences of the Spirit of God on the hearts of ſinners, he only aſſiſts natural principles to do the ſame work to a greater degree, which they do of themſelves by nature. Thus the Spirit of God by his common influences may aſſiſt mens natural ingenioſity, as he aſſiſted Bezaleel and Aholiab in the curious works of the tabernacle: ſo he may aſſiſt mens natural abilities in political affairs, and improve their courage, and other natural qualifications; as he is ſaid to have put his ſpirit on the ſeventy elders, and on Saul, ſo as to *give him another heart*: ſo God may greatly aſſiſt natural mens reaſon, in their reaſoning about ſecular things, or

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about the doctrines of religion, and may greatly advance the clearneſs of their apprehenſions and notions of things of religion in many reſpects, without giving any ſpiritual ſenſe. So in thoſe awakenings and convictions that natural men may have, God only aſſiſts conſcience, which is a natural principle, to do that work in a further degree, which it naturally does. Conſcience naturally gives men an apprehenſion of right and wrong, and ſuggeſts the relation there is between right and wrong, and a retribution: the Spirit of God aſſiſts mens conſciences to do this in a greater degree, helps conſcience againſt the ſtupifying influence of worldly objects and their luſts. And ſo there are many other ways might be mentioned wherein the Spirit acts upon, aſſiſts and moves natural principles; but after all, it is no more than nature moved, acted, and improved; here is nothing ſupernatural and divine. But the Spirit of God in his ſpiritual influences on the hearts of his ſaints, operates by infuſing or exerciſing new, divine and ſupernatural principles; principles which are indeed a new and ſpiritual nature, and principles vaſtly more noble and excellent than all that is in natural men.

From what has been ſaid it follows, that all ſpiritual and gracious affections are attended with, and do ariſe from ſome apprehenſion, idea, or ſenſation of mind, which is in its whole nature different, yea exceeding different from all that is or can be in the mind of a natural man; and which the natural man diſcerns nothing of, and has no manner of idea of, (agreeable to 1 Cor. ii. 14.) and conceives of no more than a man without the ſenſe of taſting can conceive of the ſweet taſte of honey, or a man without the ſenſe of hearing can conceive of the melody of a tune, or a man born blind can have a notion of the beauty of the rainbow.

But here two things muſt be obſerved, in order to the right underſtanding of this.

1. On the one hand it muſt be obſerved, that not every thing which in any reſpect appertains to ſpiritual affections, is new and entirely different from what natural men can conceive of, and do experience; ſome things are common to gracious affections with other affections; many circumſtances, appendages, and effects are common. Thus a ſaint's love to God has a great many things appertaining to it, which are common with a man's natural love to a near relation: love to God makes a man have deſires of the honour of God, and a deſire to pleaſe him; ſo does a natural man's love to his friend make him de-

fire his honour, and desire to please him: love to God causes a man to delight in the thoughts of God, and to delight in the presence of God, and to desire conformity to God, and the enjoyment of God; and so it is with a man's love to his friend: and many other things might be mentioned which are common to both. But yet that idea which the saint has of the loveliness of God, and that sensation, and that kind of delight he has in that view, which is as it were the marrow and quintessence of his love, is peculiar, and entirely diverse from any thing that a natural man has, or can have any notion of. And even in those things that seem to be common, there is something peculiar: both spiritual love and natural, cause desires after the object beloved; but they be not the same sort of desires; there is a sensation of soul in the spiritual desires of one that loves God, which is entirely different from all natural desires: both spiritual love and natural love are attended with delight in the object beloved; but the sensations of delight are not the same, but entirely and exceedingly diverse. Natural men may have conceptions of many things *about* spiritual affections; but there is something in them which is as it were the *nucleus*, or kernal of them, that they have no more conceptions of, than one born blind has of colours.

It may be clearly illustrated by this: we will suppose two men; one is born without the sense of tasting, the other has it; the latter loves honey, and is greatly delighted in it, because he knows the sweet taste of it; the other loves certain sounds and colours; the love of each has many things that appertain to it, which is common; it causes both to desire and delight in the object beloved, and causes grief when it is absent, *&c.*— but yet that idea or sensation which he who knows the taste of honey, has of its excellency and sweetness, that is the foundation of his love, is entirely different from any thing the other has or can have; and that delight which he has in honey, is wholly diverse from any thing that the other can conceive of; though they both delight in their beloved objects. So both these persons may in some respects love the same object: the one may love a delicious kind of fruit, which is beautiful to the eye, and of a delicious taste; not only because he has seen its pleasant colours, but knows its sweet taste; the other, perfectly ignorant of this, loves it only for its beautiful colours: there are many things seem, in some respect, to be common to both; both love, both desire, and both delight; but the love, and desire, and delight of the one, is altogether diverse from that of the other.

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The difference between the love of a natural man and ſpiritual man is like to this ; but only it muſt be obſerved, that in one reſpect it is vaſtly greater, *viz.* that the kinds of excellency which are perceived in ſpiritual objects, by theſe different kinds of perſons, are in themſelves vaſtly more diverſe than the different kinds of excellency perceived in delicious fruit, by a *taſting* and a *taſteleſs* man ; and in another reſpect it may not be ſo great, *viz.* as the ſpiritual man may have a ſpiritual ſenſe or taſte, to perceive that divine and moſt peculiar excellency, but in ſmall beginnings, and in a very imperfect degree.

2. On the other hand, it muſt be obſerved, that a natural man may have thoſe religious apprehenſions and affections, which may be in many reſpects very new and ſurpriſing to him, and what before he did not conceive of ; and yet what he experiences be nothing like the exerciſes of a principle of new nature, or the ſenſations of a new ſpiritual ſenſe : his affections may be very new, by extraordinarily moving natural principles, in a very new degree, and with a great many new circumſtances, and a new co-operation of natural affections, and a new compoſition of ideas ; this may be from ſome extraordinary powerful influence of Satan, and ſome great deluſion ; but there is nothing but nature extraordinarily acted. As if a poor man, that had always dwelt in a cottage, and had never looked beyond the obſcure village where he was born, ſhould in a jeſt, be taken to a magnificent city and prince's court, and there arrayed in princely robes, and ſet in the throne, with the crown royal on his head, peers and nobles bowing before him, and ſhould be made to believe that he was now a glorious monarch ; the ideas he would have, and the affections he would experience, would in many reſpects be very new, and ſuch as he had no imagination of before ; but all is no more, than only extraordinarily raiſing and exciting natural principles, and newly exalting, varying, and compounding ſuch ſort of ideas, as he has by nature ; here is nothing like giving him a new ſenſe.

Upon the whole, I think it is clearly manifeſt, that all truly gracious affections do ariſe from ſpecial and peculiar influences of the Spirit, working that *ſenſible effect* or *ſenſation* in the ſouls of the ſaints, which are entirely different from all that is poſſible a natural man ſhould experience, not only different in degree and circumſtances, but different in its whole nature : ſo that a natural man not only cannot experience that which is individually the ſame, but cannot experience any thing but

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what is exceeding diverſe, and immenſely below it, in its kind; and that which the power of men or devils is not ſufficient to produce the like of, or any thing of the ſame nature.

I have inſiſted largely on this matter, becauſe it is of great importance and uſe, evidently to diſcover and demonſtrate the deluſions of Satan, in many kinds of falſe religious affections, which multitudes are deluded by, and probably have been in all ages of the Chriſtian church; and to ſettle and determine many articles of doctrine, concerning the operations of the Spirit of God, and the nature of true grace.

Now therefore, to apply theſe things to the purpoſe of this diſcourſe.

From hence it appears, that impreſſions which ſome have made on their imagination, or the imaginary ideas which they have of God, or Chriſt, or heaven, or any thing appertaining to religion, have nothing in them that is ſpiritual, or of the nature of true grace. Though ſuch things may attend what is ſpiritual, and be mixed with it, yet in themſelves they have nothing that is ſpiritual, nor are they any part of gracious experience.

Here, for the ſake of the common people, I will explain what is intended by *impreſſions on the imagination*, and *imaginary ideas*. The imagination is that power of the mind, whereby it can have a conception, or idea of things of an external or outward nature, (that is, of ſuch ſort of things as are the objects of the outward ſenſes,) when thoſe things are not preſent, and be not perceived by the ſenſes. It is called imagination from the word *image*; becauſe thereby a perſon can have an image of ſome external thing in his mind, when that thing is not preſent in reality, nor any thing like it. All ſuch kind of things as we perceive by our five external ſenſes, *ſeeing*, *hearing*, *ſmelling*, *taſting*, and *feeling*, are external things; and when a perſon has an idea, or image of any of theſe ſorts of things in his mind, when they are not there, and when he does not really ſee, hear, ſmell, taſte, nor feel them; that is to have an *imagination* of them, and theſe ideas are *imaginary ideas*: and when ſuch kind of ideas are ſtrongly impreſſed upon the mind, and the image of them in the mind is very lively, almoſt as if one ſaw them, or heard them, *&c.* that is called an *impreſſion on the imagination*. Thus colours, and ſhapes, and a form of countenance, they are outward things; becauſe they are that ſort of things which are the objects of the

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outward ſenſe of ſeeing: and therefore when any perſon has in his mind a lively idea of any ſhape, or colour, or form of countenance; that is to have an imagination of thoſe things. So if he has an idea, of ſuch ſort of light or darkneſs, as he perceives by the ſenſe of ſeeing; that is to have an idea of outward light, and ſo is an imagination. So if he has an idea of any marks made on paper, ſuppoſe letters and words written in a book; that is to have an external and imaginary idea of ſuch kind of things as we ſometimes perceive by our bodily eyes. And when we have the ideas of that kind of things which we perceive by any of the other ſenſes, as of any ſounds or voices, or words ſpoken; this is only to have ideas of outward things, *viz.* of ſuch kind of things as are perceived by the external ſenſe of hearing, and ſo that alſo is imagination: and when theſe ideas are livelily impreſſed, almoſt as if they were really heard with the ears, this is to have an impreſſion on the imagination. And ſo I might go on, and inſtance in the ideas of things appertaining to the other three ſenſes of *ſmelling*, *taſting*, and *feeling*.

Many who have had ſuch things have very ignorantly ſuppoſed them to be of the nature of ſpiritual diſcoveries. They have had lively ideas of ſome external ſhape, and beautiful form of countenance; and this they call ſpiritually ſeeing Chriſt. Some have had impreſſed upon them ideas of a great outward light; and this they call a ſpiritual diſcovery of God's or Chriſt's glory. Some have had ideas of Chriſt's hanging on the croſs, and his blood running from his wounds; and this they call a ſpiritual ſight of Chriſt crucified, and the way of ſalvation by his blood. Some have ſeen him with his arms open ready to embrace them; and this they call a diſcovery of the ſufficiency of Chriſt's grace and love. Some have had lively ideas of heaven, and of Chriſt on his throne there, and ſhining ranks of ſaints and angels; and this they call ſeeing heaven opened to them. Some from time to time have had a lively idea of a perſon of a beautiful countenance ſmiling upon them; and this they call a ſpiritual diſcovery of the love of Chriſt to their ſouls, and taſting the love of Chriſt. And they look upon it a ſufficient evidence that theſe things are ſpiritual diſcoveries, and that they ſee them ſpiritually, becauſe they ſay they do not ſee theſe things with their bodily eyes, but in their hearts; for they can ſee them when their eyes are ſhut. And in like manner, the imaginations of ſome have been impreſſed

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with ideas of the ſenſe of hearing; they have had ideas o
words, as if they were ſpoke to them, ſometimes they are th
words of ſcripture, and ſometimes other words: they have ha
ideas of Chriſt's ſpeaking comfortable words to them. Thef
things they have called having the inward call of Chriſt, hear
ing the voice of Chriſt ſpiritually in their hearts, having th
witneſs of the Spirit, and the inward teſtimony of the love o
Chriſt, &c.

The common, and leſs conſiderate and underſtanding ſort o
people, are the more eaſily led into apprehenſions that theſe
things are ſpiritual things, becauſe ſpiritual things being invi-
ſible, and not things that can be pointed forth with the finger,
we are forced to uſe figurative expreſſions in ſpeaking of them,
and to borrow names from external and ſenſible objects to ſig-
nify them by. Thus we call a clear apprehenſion of things
ſpiritual by the name of *light*; and an having ſuch an appre-
henſion of ſuch or ſuch things, by the name of *ſeeing* ſuch
things; and the conviction of the judgment, and the perſua-
ſion of the will, by the word of Chriſt in the goſpel, we ſigni-
fy by *ſpiritually hearing the call of Chriſt*: and the ſcripture it-
ſelf abounds with ſuch like figurative expreſſions. Perſons
hearing theſe often uſed, and having preſſed upon them the
neceſſity of having their eyes opened, and having a diſcovery
of ſpiritual things, and ſeeing Chriſt in his glory, and having
the inward call, and the like, they ignorantly look and wait
for ſome ſuch external diſcoveries, and imaginary views as have
been ſpoken of; and when they have them, are confident that
now their eyes are opened, now Chriſt has diſcovered himſelf
to them, and they are his children; and hence are exceedingly
affected and elevated with their deliverance and happineſs, and
many kinds of affections are at once ſet in a violent motion in
them.

But it is exceeding apparent that ſuch ideas have nothing in
them which is ſpiritual and divine, in the ſenſe wherein it has
been demonſtrated that all gracious experiences are ſpiritual
and divine. Theſe external ideas are in no wiſe of ſuch a ſort,
that they are entirely, and in their whole nature diverſe from
all that men have by nature, perfectly different from, and vaſt-
ly above any ſenſation which it is poſſible a man ſhould have
by any natural ſenſe or principle, ſo that in order to have them,
a man muſt have a new ſpiritual and divine ſenſe given him,
in order to have any ſenſations of that ſort: ſo far from this,

that

that they are ideas of the ſame ſort which we have by the external ſenſes, that are ſome of the inferior powers of the human nature; they are merely ideas of external objects, or ideas of that nature, of the ſame outward ſenſitive kind; the ſame ſort of ſenſations of mind (differing not in degree, but only in circumſtances) that we have by thoſe natural principles which are common to us with the beaſts, *viz.* the five external ſenſes. This is a low, miſerable notion of ſpiritual ſenſe, to ſuppoſe that it is only a conceiving or imagining that ſort of ideas which we have by our animal ſenſes, which ſenſes the beaſts have in as great perfection as we; it is, as it were, a turning Chriſt, or the divine nature in the ſoul, into a mere animal. There is nothing wanting in the ſoul, as it is by nature, to render it capable of being the ſubject of all theſe external ideas, without any new principles. A natural man is capable of having an idea, and a lively idea of ſhapes, and colours, and ſounds when they are abſent, and as capable as a regenerate man is: ſo there is nothing ſupernatural in them. And it is known by abundant experience, that it is not the advancing or perfecting human nature, which makes perſons more capable of having ſuch lively and ſtrong imaginary ideas, but that on the contrary, the weakneſs of body and mind, and diſtempers of body, makes perſons abundantly more ſuſceptive of ſuch impreſſions. *

As to a truly ſpiritual ſenſation, not only is the manner of its coming into the mind extraordinary, but the ſenſation itſelf is totally diverſe from all that men have, or can have, in a ſtate of nature, as has been ſhown. But as to theſe external ideas, though the way of their coming into the mind is ſometimes unuſual, yet the ideas in themſelves are not the better for that; they are ſtill of no different ſort from what men have by their ſenſes; they are of no higher kind, nor a whit better.

For

* "Conceits and whimſies abound moſt in men of weak reaſon; 'children, and ſuch as are cracked in their underſtanding, have 'moſt of them; ſtrength of reaſon baniſhes them, as the ſun does 'miſts and vapours. But now the more rational any gracious per'ſon is, by ſo much more is he fixed and ſettled, and ſatisfied in the 'grounds of religion: yea, there is the higheſt and pureſt reaſon in 'religion; and when this change is wrought upon men, it is car'ried on in a rational way, Iſ. i. 18. John xix. 9." *Flavel's Preparation for Sufferings*, Chap. vi.

For inſtance, the external idea a man has now of Chriſt hanging on the croſs, and ſhedding his blood, is no better in itſelf, than the external idea that the Jews his enemies had, who ſtood round his croſs, and ſaw this with their bodily eyes. The imaginary idea which men have now, of an external brightneſs and glory of God, is no better than the idea the wicked congregation in the wilderneſs had of the external glory of the Lord at mount Sinai, when they ſaw it with bodily eyes; or any better than that idea which millions of curſed reprobates will have of the external glory of Chriſt at the day of judgment, who ſhall ſee, and have a very lively idea of ten thouſand times greater external glory of Chriſt, than ever yet was conceived in any man's imagination: † yea, the image of Chriſt, which men conceive in their imaginations, is not in its own nature, of any ſuperior kind to the idea the Papiſts conceive of Chriſt, by the beautiful and affecting images of him which they ſee in their churches; (though the way of their receiving the idea may not be ſo bad;) nor are the affections they have, if built primarily on ſuch imaginations, any better than the affections raiſed in the ignorant people, by the ſight of thoſe images, which oftentimes are very great; eſpecially when theſe images, through the craft of the prieſts, are made to move, and ſpeak, and weep, and the like. ‡ Merely the way

† "If any man ſhould ſee, and behold Chriſt really, immediately, "this is not the ſaving knowledge of him. I know the ſaints do "know Chriſt as if immediately preſent; they are not ſtrangers by "their diſtance: if others have ſeen him more immediately, I will "not diſpute it. But if they have ſeen the Lord Jeſus as immediately "as if here on earth, yet Capernaum ſaw him ſo; nay ſome of them "were diſciples for a time, and followed him, John vi. And yet "the Lord was hid from their eyes. Nay, all the world ſhall ſee "him in his glory, which ſhall amaze them; and yet this is far "ſhort of having the ſaving knowledge of him, which the Lord "doth communicate to the elect. So that though you ſee the Lord "ſo really, as that you become familiar with him, yet Luke xiii. 26. "*Lord, have we not eat and drank*, &c.—and ſo periſh." *Shepard's* "*Parable of the ten virgins*, P. I. p. 197, 198.

‡ "Satan is transformed into an angel of light: and hence we "have heard that ſome have heard voices; ſome have ſeen the very "blood of Chriſt dropping on them, and his wounds in his ſide; "ſome have ſeen a great light ſhining in the chamber; ſome won-"derfully affected with their dreams; ſome in great diſtreſs have "had

way of perſons receiving theſe imaginary ideas, do not alter the nature of the ideas themſelves that are received: let them be received in what way they will, they are ſtill but external ideas, or ideas of outward appearances, and ſo are not ſpiritual. Yea, if men ſhould actually receive ſuch external ideas by the immediate power of the moſt high God upon their minds, they would not be ſpiritual, they ſhould be no more than a common work of the Spirit of God; as is evident in fact, in the inſtance of Balaam, who had impreſſed on his mind, by God himſelf, a clear and lively outward repreſentation or idea of Jeſus Chriſt, as *the Star riſing out of Jacob*, when *he heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Moſt High, and ſaw the viſion of the Almighty, falling into a trance*, Numb. xxiv. 16, 17. but yet had no manner of ſpiritual diſcovery of Chriſt; that Day-ſtar never ſpiritually roſe in his heart, he being but a natural man.

And as theſe external ideas have nothing divine or ſpiritual in their nature, and nothing but what natural men, without any new principles, are capable of; ſo there is nothing in their nature which requires that peculiar, inimitable and unparallelled exerciſe of the glorious power of God, in order to their production, which it has been ſhown there is in the production of true grace. There appears to be nothing in their nature above the power of the devil. It is certainly not above the power of Satan to ſuggeſt thoughts to men; becauſe otherwiſe he could not tempt them to ſin. And if he can ſuggeſt any thoughts or ideas at all, doubtleſs imaginary ones, or ideas of things external are not above his power §; for the external ideas men have are the loweſt ſort of ideas. Theſe ideas may be raiſed only by impreſſions made on the body, by moving

" had inward witneſs, *Thy ſins are forgiven*; and hence ſuch liber-
" ty and joy, that they are ready to leap up and down the chamber.
" O adulterous generation! this is natural and uſual with men, they
" would fain ſee Jeſus, and have him preſent to give them peace; and
" hence Papiſts have his images.—Wo to them that have no other
" manifeſted Chriſt, but ſuch an one." *Shepard's Parable of the ten virgins*. P. I. p. 198.

§ Conſider how difficult, yea and impoſſible it is to determine that ſuch a voice, viſion, or revelation is of God, and that Satan cannot feign or counterfeit it; ſeeing he hath left no certain marks by which we may diſtinguiſh one ſpirit from another." *Flavel's Cauſes and cures of mental errors*, Cauſe 14.

the animal ſpirits, and impreſſing the brain. Abundant experience does certainly ſhow, that alterations in the body will excite imaginary or external ideas in the mind; as often, in caſe of a high fever, melancholy, &c. Theſe external ideas are as much below the more intellectual exerciſes of the ſoul, as the body is a leſs noble part of man than the ſoul.

And there is not only nothing in the nature of theſe external ideas or imaginations of outward appearances, from whence we can infer that they are above the power of the devil; but it is certain alſo that the devil can excite, and often hath excited ſuch ideas. They were external ideas which he excited in the dreams and viſions of the falſe prophets of old, who were under the influence of lying ſpirits, that we often read of in ſcripture, as Deut. xiii. 1. 1 Kings xxii. 22. Iſ. xxviii. 7. Ezek. xiii. 7. Zech. xiii. 4. And they were external ideas that he often excited in the minds of the heathen prieſts, magicians and ſorcerers in their viſions and ecſtaſies; and they were external ideas that he excited in the mind of the man Chriſt Jeſus, when he ſhewed him all the kingdoms of the world, with the glory of them, when thoſe kingdoms were not really in ſight.

And if Satan, or any created being, has power to impreſs the mind with outward repreſentations, then no particular ſort of outward repreſentations can be any evidence of a divine power. Almighty power is no more requiſite to repreſent the ſhape of man to the imagination, than the ſhape of any thing elſe: there is no higher kind of power neceſſary to form in the brain one bodily ſhape or colour than another: it needs a no more glorious power to repreſent the form of the body of man, than the form of a chip or block; though it be of a very beautiful human body, with a ſweet ſmile in his countenance, or arms open, or blood running from hands, feet, and ſide: that ſort of power which can repreſent black or darkneſs to the imagination, can alſo repreſent white and ſhining brightneſs: the power and ſkill which can well and exactly paint a ſtraw, or a ſtick of wood, on a piece of paper or canvas; the ſame in kind, only perhaps further improved, will be ſufficient to paint the body of a man, with great beauty and in royal majeſty, or a magnificent city, paved with gold, full of brightneſs, and a glorious throne, &c. So it is no more than the ſame ſort of power that is requiſite to paint one as the other of theſe on the brain. The ſame ſort of power that can put ink upon paper,

can

can put on leaf-gold. So that it is evident to a demonſtration, if we ſuppoſe it to be in the devil's power to make any ſort of external repreſentation at all on the fancy, (as without doubt it is, and never any one queſtioned it who believed there was a devil, that had any agency with mankind;) I ſay, if ſo, it is demonſtrably evident, that a created power may extend to all kinds of external appearances and ideas in the mind.

From hence it again clearly appears, that no ſuch things have any thing in them that is ſpiritual, ſupernatural, and divine, in the ſenſe in which it has been proved that all truly gracious experiences have. And though external ideas, through man's make and frame, do ordinarily in ſome degree attend ſpiritual experiences, yet theſe ideas are no part of their ſpiritual experience, any more than the motion of the blood, and beating of the pulſe, that attends experiences, are a part of ſpiritual experience. And though undoubtedly, through mens infirmity in the preſent ſtate, and eſpecially through the weak conſtitution of ſome perſons, gracious affections which are very ſtrong, do excite lively ideas in the imagination; yet it is alſo undoubted, that when perſons affections are *founded on* imaginations, which is often the caſe, thoſe affections are merely natural and common, becauſe they are built on a foundation that is not ſpiritual; and ſo are entirely different from gracious affections, which, as has been proved, do evermore ariſe from thoſe operations that are ſpiritual and divine.

Theſe imaginations do oftentimes raiſe the carnal affections of men to an exceeding great height*: and no wonder, when the

* There is a remarkable paſſage of Mr. John Smith, in his diſcourſe on the ſhortneſs of a Phariſaic righteouſneſs, P. 370, 371. of his ſelect diſcourſes, deſcribing that ſort of religion which is built on ſuch a foundation as I am here ſpeaking of. I cannot forbear tranſcribing the whole of it. Speaking of a ſort of Chriſtians, whoſe life is nothing but a ſtrong energy of fancy, he ſays, "Leſt their religion might too groſsly diſcover itſelf to be nothing elſe but a piece of art, there may be ſometimes ſuch extraordinary motions ſtirred up within them, which may prevent all their own thoughts, that they may ſeem to be a true operation of the divine life; when yet all this is nothing elſe but the energy of their own ſelf-love, touched with ſome fleſhly apprehenſions of divine things, and excited by them. There are ſuch things in our Chriſtian religion, when a carnal, unhallowed mind takes the chair, and gets the expounding of them, may ſeem very delicious to the fleſhly appetites of men; ſome doctrines and notions of free grace and juſtification, the magnificent titles of ſons of God

the ſubjects of them have an ignorant, but undoubting perſuaſion, that they are divine manifeſtations, which the great JEHOVAH immediately makes to their ſouls, therein giving them teſtimonies, in an extraordinary manner, of his high and peculiar favour.

Again, it is evident from what has been obſerved and proved of the manner in which gracious operations and effects in the heart are ſpiritual, ſupernatural and divine, that the immediate ſuggeſting of the words of ſcripture to the mind, has nothing in it which is ſpiritual.

I have had occaſion to ſay ſomething of this already; and what has been ſaid may be ſufficient to evince it: but if the reader bears in mind what has been ſaid concerning the nature of ſpiritual influences and effects, it will be more abundantly manifeſt that this is no ſpiritual effect. For I ſuppoſe there is no perſon of common underſtanding, who will ſay or imagine, that

God and heirs of heaven, ever-flowing ſtreams of joy and pleaſure that bleſſed ſouls ſhall ſwim in to all eternity, a glorious paradiſe in the world to come, always ſpringing up with well-ſcented and fragrant beauties, a new Jeruſalem paved with gold, and beſpangled with ſtars, comprehending in its vaſt circuit ſuch numberleſs varieties, that a buſy curioſity may ſpend itſelf about to all eternity. I doubt not but that ſometimes the moſt fleſhly and earthly men, that fly in their ambition to the pomp of this world, may be ſo raviſhed with the conceits of ſuch things as theſe, that they may ſeem to be made partakers of the powers of the world to come. I doubt not but that they might be much exalted with them, as the ſouls of crazed or diſtracted perſons ſeem to be ſometimes, when their fancies play with thoſe quick and nimble ſpirits, which a diſtempered frame of body, and unnatural heat in their heads, beget within them. Thus may theſe blazing comets riſe up above the moon, and climb higher than the ſun; which yet, becauſe they have no ſolid conſiſtence of their own, and are of a baſe and earthly alloy, will ſoon vaniſh and fall down again, being only borne up by an external force. They may ſeem to themſelves to have attained higher than thoſe noble Chriſtians, that are gently moved by the natural force of true goodneſs: they ſeem to be *pleniores Deo*, (*i. e.* more full of God) than thoſe that are really informed and actuated by the divine Spirit, and do move on ſteadily and conſtantly in the way towards heaven. As the ſeed that was ſown in ſtony ground, grew up, and lengthened out its blade faſter, than that which was ſown in the good and fruitful ſoil. And as the motions of our ſenſe, and fancy, and paſſions, while our ſouls are in this mortal condition, ſunk down deeply into the body, are many times more vigorous, and make ſtronger impreſſions upon us, than

that the bringing words (let them be what words they will) to the mind, is an effect of that nature which it is impoſſible the mind of a natural man, while he remains in a ſtate of nature, ſhould be the ſubject of, or any thing like it; or that it requires any new divine ſenſe in the ſoul; or that the bringing ſounds or letters to the mind, is an effect of ſo high, holy and excellent a nature, that it is impoſſible any created power ſhould be the cauſe of it.

As the ſuggeſting words of ſcripture to the mind, is only the exciting in the mind ideas of certain ſounds or letters; ſo it is only one way of exciting ideas in the imagination; for ſounds and letters are external things, that are the objects of the external ſenſes of ſeeing and hearing. Ideas of certain marks upon paper, ſuch as any of the twenty-four letters, in whatever order, or any ſounds of the voice, are as much external ideas, as of any other ſhapes or ſounds whatſoever: and therefore, by what has been already ſaid concerning theſe external ideas, it

is

than thoſe of the higher powers of the ſoul, which are more ſubtil, and remote from theſe mixt animal perceptions: that devotion which is there ſeated, may ſeem to have more energy and life in it, than that which gently, and with a more delicate kind of touch, ſpreads itſelf upon the underſtanding, and from thence mildly derives itſelf through our wills and affections. But however the former may be more boiſterous for a time, yet this is of a more conſiſtent, ſpermatical, and thriving nature. For that proceeding indeed from nothing but a ſenſual and fleſhly apprehenſion of God and true happineſs, is but of a ſlitting and fading nature: and as the ſenſible powers and faculties grow more languid, or the ſun of divine light ſhines more brightly upon us, theſe earthly devotions, like our culinary fires, will abate their heat and fervour. But a true celeſtial warmth will never be extinguiſhed, becauſe it is of an immortal nature; and being once ſeated vitally in the ſouls of men, it will regulate and order all the motions of it in a due manner; as the natural heat, radicated in the hearts of living creatures hath the dominion and œconomy of the whole body under it. True religion is no piece of artifice: it is no boiling up of our imaginative powers, nor the glowing heats of paſſion;---- though theſe are too often miſtaken for it, when in our jugglings in religion we caſt a miſt before our own eyes: but it is a new nature, informing the ſouls of men; it is a godlike frame of ſpirit, diſcovering itſelf moſt of all in ſerene and clear minds, in deep humility, meekneſs, ſelf-denial, univerſal love to God and all true goodneſs, without partiality, and without hypocriſy, whereby we are taught to know God, and knowing him to love him, and conform ourſelves as much as may be to all that perfection which ſhines in him."

is evident they are nothing ſpiritual: and if at any time the Spirit of God ſuggeſts theſe letters or ſounds to the mind, this is a *common*, and not any *ſpecial* or *gracious* influence of that Spirit. And therefore it follows from what has been already proved, that thoſe affections which have this effect for their foundation, are no ſpiritual or gracious affections.—But let it be obſerved what it is that I ſay, *viz.* when this effect, even the immediate and extraordinary *manner of words of ſcripture's coming to the mind*, is that which excites the affections, and is properly the foundation of them, then theſe affections are not ſpiritual. It may be ſo, that perſons may have gracious affections going with ſcriptures which come to their minds, and the Spirit of God may make uſe of thoſe ſcriptures to excite them; when it is ſome ſpiritual ſenſe, taſte or reliſh they have of the divine and excellent things contained in thoſe ſcriptures, that is the thing which excites their affections, and not the extraordinary and ſudden manner of words being brought to their minds. They are affected with the inſtruction they receive from the words, and the view of the glorious things of God or Chriſt, and things appertaining to them, that they contain and teach; and not becauſe the words came ſuddenly, as though ſome perſon had ſpoke them to them, thence concluding that God did as it were immediately ſpeak to them. Perſons oftentimes are exceedingly affected on this foundation; the words of ſome great and high promiſes of ſcripture come ſuddenly to their minds, and they look upon the words as directed immediately by God to them, as though the words that moment proceeded out of the mouth of God as ſpoken to them: ſo that they take it as a voice from God, immediately revealing to them their happy circumſtances, and promiſing ſuch and ſuch great things to them: and this it is that affects and elevates them. There is no new ſpiritual underſtanding of the divine *things contained in the ſcripture*, or new ſpiritual ſenſe of the glorious things taught in that part of the Bible, going before their affection, and being the foundation of it: all the new underſtanding they have, or think they have, to be the foundation of their affection, is this, that the words *are ſpoken to them*, becauſe they come ſo ſuddenly and extraordinarily. And ſo this affection is built wholly on the ſand; becauſe it is built on a concluſion for which they have no foundation. For, as has been ſhown, the ſudden coming of the words to their minds, is no evidence that the bringing them to their minds in that manner, was from God. And if it was true that God brought the words to their minds,

and

and they certainly knew it, that would not be ſpiritual knowlege; it may be without any ſpiritual ſenſe: Balaam might know that the words which God ſuggeſted to him, were indeed ſuggeſted to him by God, and yet have no ſpiritual knowlege. So that theſe affections which are built on that notion, that texts of ſcripture are ſent immediately from God, are built on no ſpiritual foundation, and are vain and deluſive. Perſons who have their affections thus raiſed, if they ſhould be inquired of, whether they have any new ſenſe of the excellency of things contained in thoſe ſcriptures, would probably ſay, *Yes*, without heſitation: but it is true no otherwiſe than thus, that when they have taken up that notion, that the words are ſpoken immediately to them, that makes them ſeem ſweet to them, and they own the things which theſe ſcriptures ſay to them, for excellent things, and wonderful things. As for inſtance, ſuppoſing theſe were the words which were ſuddenly brought to their minds, *Fear not,——it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom*; they having confidently taken up a notion that the words were as it were immediately ſpoken from heaven to them, as an immediate revelation, that God was their father, and had given the kingdom to them, they are greatly affected by it, and the words ſeem ſweet to them; and oh, they ſay, *they are excellent things that are contained in thoſe words!* But the reaſon why the promiſe ſeems excellent to them, is only becauſe they think it is made to them immediately: all the ſenſe they have of any glory in them, is only from ſelf-love, and from their own imagined intereſt in the words: not that they had any view or ſenſe of the holy and glorious nature of the kingdom of heaven, and the ſpiritual glory of that God who gives it, and of his excellent grace to ſinful men, in offering and giving them this kingdom, of his own good pleaſure, preceding their imagined intereſt in theſe things, and their being affected by them, and being the foundation of their affection, and hope of an intereſt in them. On the contrary, they firſt imagine they are intereſted, and then are highly affected with that, and then can own theſe things to be excellent. So that the ſudden and extraordinary way of the ſcripture's coming to their mind, is plainly the firſt foundation of the whole; which is a clear evidence of the wretched deluſion they are under.

The firſt comfort of many perſons, and what they call their converſion, is after this manner: after awakening and terrors, ſome comfortable ſweet promiſe comes ſuddenly and wonderfully to their minds; and the manner of its coming makes

them

them conclude it comes from God *to them:* and this is the very thing that is all the foundation of their faith, and hope and comfort: from hence they take their firſt encouragement to truſt in God and in Chriſt, becauſe they think that God, by ſome ſcripture ſo brought, has now already revealed to them that he loves them, and has already promiſed them eternal life; which is very abſurd; for every one of common knowlege of the principles of religion, knows that it is God's manner to reveal his love to men, and their intereſt in the promiſes, after they have believed, and not before; becauſe they muſt firſt believe, before they have any intereſt in the promiſes to be revealed. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of truth, and not of lies: he does not bring ſcriptures to mens minds, to reveal to them that they have an intereſt in God's favor and promiſes, when they have none, having not yet believed: which would be the caſe, if God's bringing texts of ſcripture to mens minds, to reveal to them that their ſins were forgiven, or that it was God's pleaſure to give them the kingdom, or any thing of that nature, went before, and was the foundation of their firſt faith. There is no promiſe of the covenant of grace belongs to any man, until he has firſt believed in Chriſt; for it is by faith alone that we become intereſted in Chriſt, and the promiſes of the new covenant made in him: and therefore whatever ſpirit applies the promiſes of that covenant to a perſon who has not firſt believed, as being already his, muſt be a lying ſpirit; and that faith which is firſt built on ſuch an application of promiſes, is built upon a lie. God's manner is not to bring comfortable texts of ſcripture to give men *aſſurance* of his love, and that they ſhall be happy, before they have had a faith of *dependence*.† And if the ſcripture which comes to a perſon's

† Mr. Stoddard, in his *Guide to Chriſt*, p. 8. ſays, that "ſometimes men after they have been in trouble a while, have ſome promiſes come to them, with a great deal of refreſhing; and they hope God has accepted them:" And ſays, that "In this caſe, the miniſter may tell them, that God never gives a faith of aſſurance, before he gives a faith of dependence; for he never manifeſts his love, until men are in a ſtate of favor and reconciliation, which is by faith of dependence. When men have comfortable ſcriptures come to them, they are apt to take them as tokens of God's love; but men muſt be brought into Chriſt, by accepting the offer of the goſpel, before they are fit for ſuch manifeſtations. God's method is, firſt to make the ſoul accept of the offers of grace, and then to manifeſt

perſon's mind, be not ſo properly a promiſe, as an invitation; yet if he makes the ſudden or unuſual manner of the invitation's coming to his mind, the ground on which he believes that he is invited, it is not true faith; becauſe it is built on that which is not the true ground of faith. True faith is built on no precarious foundation: but a determination that the words of ſuch a particular text, were, by the immediate power of God, ſuggeſted to the mind, at ſuch a time, as though then ſpoken and directed by God to him, becauſe the words came after ſuch a manner, is wholly an uncertain and precarious determination, as has been now ſhown; and therefore is a falſe and ſandy foundation for faith; and accordingly that faith which is built upon it is falſe. The only certain foundation which any perſon has to believe that he is invited to partake of the bleſſings of the goſpel, is, that the word of God declares

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ſeſt his good eſtate unto him." And p. 76. ſpeaking of them "that ſeem to be brought to lie at God's foot, and give an account of their cloſing with Chriſt, and that God has revealed Chriſt to them, and drawn their hearts to him, and that they do accept of Chriſt," he ſays, "In this caſe, it is beſt to examine whether by that light that was given him, he ſaw Chriſt and ſalvation offered to him, or whether he ſaw that God loved him, or pardoned him: for the offer of grace and our acceptance goes before pardon, and therefore, much more, before the knowlege of it."

Mr. Shepard, in his *Parable of the ten virgins*, Part. II. p. 15. ſays, that "Grace and the love of Chriſt (the faireſt colours under the ſun) may be pretended; but if you ſhall receive, under this appearance, that God witneſſeth his love, firſt by an abſolute promiſe, take heed there; for under this appearance you may as well bring in immediate revelations, and from thence come to forſake the ſcriptures."

And in Part I. p. 86. he ſays "is Chriſt yours? Yes, I ſee it. How? By any word or promiſe! No: this is deluſion." And p. 136. ſpeaking of them that have no ſolid ground of peace, he reckons, "Thoſe that content themſelves with the revelation of the Lord's love, without the ſight of any work, or not looking to it." And ſays preſently after, "The teſtimony of the Spirit does not make a man more a Chriſtian, but only evidenceth it; as it is the nature of a witneſs, not to make a thing to be true, but to clear and evidence it." And p. 140. ſpeaking of them that ſay they have the witneſs of the Spirit, that makes a difference between them and hypocrites, he ſays, "The witneſs of the Spirit makes not the firſt difference: for firſt a man is a believer, and in Chriſt, and juſtified, called, and ſanctified, before the Spirit does witneſs it; elſe the Spirit ſhould witneſs to an untruth and lie."

that perſons ſo qualified as he is, are invited, and God who declares it, is true and cannot lie. If a ſinner be once convinced of the veracity of God, and that the ſcriptures are his word, he will need no more to convince and ſatisfy him that he is invited; for the ſcriptures are full of invitations to ſinners, to the chief of ſinners, to come and partake of the benefits of the goſpel: he will not want any new ſpeaking of God to him, what he hath ſpoken already will be enough with him.

As the firſt comfort of many perſons, and their affections at the time of their ſuppoſed converſion, are built on ſuch grounds as theſe which have been mentioned; ſo are their joys and hopes, and other affections, from time to time afterwards. They have often particular words of ſcripture, ſweet declarations and promiſes ſuggeſted to them, which by reaſon of the manner of their coming, they think are *immediately* ſent from God to them, *at that time*; which they look upon as their warrant to take them; and which they actually make the main ground of their appropriating them to themſelves, and of the comfort they take in them, and the confidence they receive from them. Thus they imagine a kind of converſation is carried on between God and them; and that God, from time to time, does, as it were, immediately ſpeak to them, and ſatisfy their doubts, and teſtifies his love to them, and promiſes them ſupports and ſupplies, and his bleſſing in ſuch and ſuch caſes, and reveals to them clearly their intereſts in eternal bleſſings. And thus they are often elevated, and have a courſe of a ſudden and tumultuous kind of joys, mingled with a ſtrong confidence, and high opinion of themſelves; when indeed the main ground of theſe joys, and this confidence, is not any thing *contained in*, or *taught by* theſe ſcriptures, as they lie in the Bible, but the *manner of their coming to them*; which is a certain evidence of their deluſion. There is no particular promiſe in the word of God that is the ſaint's, or is any otherwiſe made to him, or ſpoken to him, than all the promiſes of the covenant of grace are his, and are made to him, and ſpoken to him:† though it be true that ſome of theſe promiſes may be more

† Mr. Shepard, in his *Sound Believer*, p. 159. of the late impreſſion at Boſton, ſays, "Embrace in thy boſom, not only ſome few promiſes, but all." And then he aſks the queſtion, "When may a Chriſtian make a promiſe without preſumption, as ſpoken to him?" He anſwers, "The rule is very ſweet, but certain; when he takes all

more peculiarly adapted to his caſe than others ; and God by his Spirit may enable him better to underſtand ſome than others, and to have a greater ſenſe of the preciouſneſs, and glory, and ſuitableneſs of the bleſſings contained in them.

But here ſome may be ready to ſay, What, is there no ſuch thing as any particular ſpiritual application of the promiſes of ſcripture by the Spirit of God ? I anſwer, there is doubtleſs ſuch a thing as a ſpiritual and ſaving application of the invitations and promiſes of ſcripture to the ſouls of men : but it is alſo certain, that the nature of it is wholly miſunderſtood by many perſons, to the great enſnaring of their own ſouls, and the giving Satan a vaſt advantage againſt them, and againſt the intereſt of religion, and the church of God. The ſpiritual application of a ſcripture promiſe does not conſiſt in its being immediately ſuggeſted to the thoughts by ſome extrinſic agent, and being borne into the mind with this ſtrong apprehenſion, that it is particularly ſpoken and directed to them at that time : there is nothing of the evidence of the hand of God in this effect, as events have proved, in many notorious inſtances ; and it is a mean notion of a ſpiritual application of ſcripture ; there is nothing in the nature of it at all beyond the power of the devil, if he be not reſtrained by God ; for there is nothing in the nature of the effect that is ſpiritual, implying any vital communication of God. A truly ſpiritual application of the word of God is of a vaſtly higher nature ; as much above the devil's power, as it is, ſo to apply the word of God to a dead corpſe, as to raiſe it to life ; or to a ſtone, to turn it into an angel. A ſpiritual application of the word of God conſiſts in *applying it to the heart*, in ſpiritually enlightening, ſanctifying influences. A ſpiritual application of an invitation or offer of the goſpel conſiſts in giving the ſoul a ſpiritual ſenſe or reliſh of the holy and divine bleſſings offered, and alſo the ſweet and wonderful grace of the offerer, in making ſo gracious an offer, and of his holy excellency and faithfulneſs to fulfil what he offers,

and

all the ſcripture, and embraces it as ſpoken unto him, he may then take any particular promiſe boldly. My meaning is, when a Chriſtian takes hold, and wreſtles with God for the accompliſhment of all the promiſes of the New Teſtament, when he ſets all the commands before him, as a compaſs and guide to walk after, when he applies all the threatenings to drive him nearer unto Chriſt the end of them. This no hypocrite can do ; this the ſaints ſhall do ; and by this they may know when the Lord ſpeaks in particular unto them."

and his glorious ſufficiency for it; ſo leading and drawing forth the heart to embrace the offer; and thus giving the man evidence of his title to the thing offered. And ſo a ſpiritual application of the promiſes of ſcripture, for the comfort of the ſaints, conſiſts in enlightening their minds to ſee the holy excellency and ſweetneſs of the bleſſings promiſed, and alſo the holy excellency of the promiſer, and his faithfulneſs and ſufficiency; thus drawing forth their hearts to embrace the promiſer, and thing promiſed; and by this means, giving the ſenſible actings of grace, enabling them to ſee their grace, and ſo their title to the promiſe. An application not conſiſting in this divine ſenſe and enlightening of the mind, but conſiſting only in the word's being borne into the thoughts, as if immediately then ſpoken, ſo making perſons believe, on no other foundation, that the promiſe is theirs; is a blind application, and belongs to the ſpirit of darkneſs, and not of light.

When perſons have their affections raiſed after this manner, thoſe affections are really not raiſed by the word of God; the ſcripture is not the foundation of them; it is not any thing contained in thoſe ſcriptures which come to their minds, that raiſe their affections; but truly that effect, *viz.* the ſtrange manner of the word's being ſuggeſted to their minds, and a propoſition from thence taken up by them, which indeed is not contained in that ſcripture, nor any other; as that *his* ſins are forgiven him, or that it is the Father's good pleaſure to give *him in particular* the kingdom, or the like. There are propoſitions to be found in the Bible, declaring that perſons of ſuch and ſuch qualifications are forgiven and beloved of God: but there are no propoſitions to be found in the Bible declaring that ſuch and ſuch particular perſons, independent on any previous knowlege of any qualifications, are forgiven and beloved of God: and therefore, when any perſon is comforted, and affected by any ſuch propoſition, it is by another word, a word newly coined, and not any word of God contained in the Bible.† And thus many perſons are vainly affected and deluded.

Again,

† "Some Chriſtians have reſted with a work without Chriſt, which is abominable: but after a man is in Chriſt, not to judge by the work, is firſt not to judge from a word. For though there is a word, which may give a man a *dependence* on Chriſt, without feeling any work, nay when he feels none, as abſolute promiſes; yet no word

Again, it plainly appears from what has been demonſtrated, *that no revelation of ſecret facts by immediated ſuggeſtion,* is any thing ſpiritual and divine, in that ſenſe wherein gracious effects and operations are ſo.

By *ſecret facts*, I mean things that have been done, or are come to paſs, or ſhall hereafter come to paſs, which are ſecret in that ſenſe that they do not appear to the ſenſes, nor are known by any argumentation, or any evidence to reaſon, nor any other way, but only by that revelation by immediate ſuggeſtion of the ideas of them to the mind. Thus for inſtance, if it ſhould be revealed to me, that the next year this land would be invaded by a fleet from France, or that ſuch and ſuch perſons would then be converted, or that I myſelf ſhould then be converted; not by enabling me to argue out theſe events from any thing which now appears in providence; but immediately ſuggeſting and bearing in upon my mind, in an extraordinary manner, the apprehenſion or ideas of theſe facts, with a ſtrong ſuggeſtion or impreſſion on my mind, that I had no hand in myſelf, that theſe things would come to paſs: or if it ſhould be revealed to me, that this day there is a battle fought between the armies of ſuch and ſuch powers in Europe; or that ſuch a prince in Europe was this day converted, or is now in a converted ſtate, having been converted formerly, or that one of my neighbours is converted, or that I myſelf am converted; not by having any other evidence of any of theſe facts, from whence I argue them, but an immediate extraordinary ſuggeſtion or excitation of theſe ideas, and a ſtrong impreſſion of them upon my mind: this is a revelation of ſecret facts by immediate ſuggeſtion, as much as if the facts were future; for the facts being paſt, preſent, or future, alters not the caſe, as long as they are ſecret and hidden from my ſenſes and reaſon, and not ſpoken of in ſcripture, nor known by me any other way than by *immediate ſuggeſtion.* If I have it revealed to me, that ſuch a revolution is come to paſs this day in the Ottoman empire, it is the very

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word giving *aſſurance*, but that which is made to ſome work, *He that believeth, or is poor in ſpirit*, &c. until that work is ſeen, has no aſſurance from that promiſe." *Shepard's Parable of the ten virgins*. Part I. p. 86.

"If God ſhould tell a ſaint that he has grace, he might know it by believing the word of God: but it is not in this way that godly men do know that they have grace; it is not revealed in the word, and the Spirit of God doth not teſtify it to particular perſons." *Stoddard's Nature of ſaving Converſion*. p. 84, 85.

ſame ſort of revelation, as if it were revealed to me that ſuch a revolution would come to paſs there this day come twelve-months; becauſe, though one is preſent and the other future, yet both are equally hidden from me, any other way than by immediate revelation. When Samuel told Saul that the aſſes which he went to ſeek were found, and that his father had left caring for the aſſes and ſorrowed for him; this was by the ſame kind of revelation, as that by which he told Saul, that in the plain of Tabor, there ſhould meet him three men going up to God to Bethel, (1 Sam. x. 2, 3.) though one of theſe things was future, and the other was not. So when Eliſha told the king of Iſrael the words that the king of Syria ſpake in his bed-chamber, it was by the ſame kind of revelation with that by which he foretold many things to come.

It is evident that this revelation of ſecret facts by immediate ſuggeſtion, has nothing of the nature of a ſpiritual and divine operation, in the ſenſe fore-mentioned; there is nothing at all in the nature of the perceptions or ideas themſelves, which are excited in the mind, that is divinely excellent, and ſo, far above all the ideas of natural men; though the manner of exciting the ideas be extraordinary. In thoſe things which are ſpiritual, as has been ſhown, not only *the manner of producing the effect*, but *the effect wrought* is divine, and ſo vaſtly above all that can be in an unſanctified mind. Now ſimply the having an idea of facts, ſetting aſide the manner of producing thoſe ideas, is nothing beyond what the minds of wicked men are ſuſceptible of, without any goodneſs in them; and they all, either have or will have, the knowlege of the truth of the greateſt and moſt important facts, that have been, are, or ſhall be.

And as to the extraordinary manner of producing the ideas or perception of facts, even by immediate ſuggeſtion, there is nothing in it, but what the minds of natural men, while they are yet natural men, are capable of; as is manifeſt in Balaam, and others ſpoken of in the ſcripture. And therefore it appears that there is nothing appertaining to this immediate ſuggeſtion of ſecret facts that is ſpiritual, in the ſenſe in which it has been proved that gracious operations are ſo. If there be nothing in the ideas themſelves, which is holy and divine, and ſo nothing but what may be in a mind not ſanctified, then God can put them into the mind *by immediate power*, without ſanctifying it. As there is nothing in the idea of a rainbow itſelf,

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that is of a holy and divine nature; ſo that there is nothing hinders but that an unſanctified mind may receive that idea: ſo God if he pleaſes, and when he pleaſes, *immediately, and in an extraordinary manner*, may excite that idea in an unſanctified mind. So alſo, as there is nothing in the idea or knowlege that ſuch and ſuch particular perſons are forgiven and accepted of God, and intitled to heaven, but what unſanctified minds may have and will have concerning many at the day of judgment; ſo God can if he pleaſes, extraordinarily and immediately ſuggeſt this to, and impreſs it upon an unſanctified mind now: there is no principle wanting in an unſanctified mind, to make it capable of ſuch a ſuggeſtion or impreſſion; nor is there any thing in them to exclude, or neceſſarily to prevent ſuch a ſuggeſtion.

And if theſe ſuggeſtions of ſecret facts be attended with *texts of ſcripture*, immediately and extraordinarily brought to mind, about ſome other facts that ſeem in ſome reſpects ſimilar, that does not make the operation to be of a ſpiritual and divine nature. For that ſuggeſtion of words of ſcripture is no more divine, than the ſuggeſtion of the facts themſelves; as has been juſt now demonſtrated: and two effects together, which are neither of them ſpiritual, cannot make up one complex effect, that is ſpiritual.

Hence it follows, from what has been already ſhown, and often repeated, that thoſe affections which are properly founded on ſuch immediate ſuggeſtions, or ſuppoſed ſuggeſtions, of ſecret facts, are not gracious affections. Not but that it is poſſible that ſuch ſuggeſtions may *be the occaſion*, or *accidental cauſe* of gracious affections; for ſo may a miſtake and deluſion; but it is never properly the *foundation* of gracious affections: for gracious affections, as has been ſhewn, are all the effects of an influence and operation which is ſpiritual, ſupernatural, and divine. But there are many affections, and high affections, which ſome have, that have ſuch kind of ſuggeſtions or revelations for their very foundation: they look upon theſe as ſpiritual diſcoveries; which is a groſs deluſion; and this deluſion is truly the ſpring whence their affections flow.

Here it may be proper to obſerve, that it is exceeding manifeſt from what has been ſaid, that what many perſons call the *witneſs of the Spirit*, that they are the children of God, has nothing in it ſpiritual and divine; and conſequently that the affections built upon it, are vain and deluſive. That which ma-

ny call the witneſs of the Spirit, is no other than an immediate ſuggeſtion and impreſſion of that fact, otherwiſe ſecret, that they are converted, or made the children of God, and ſo that their ſins are pardoned, and that God has given them a title to heaven. This kind of knowlege, *viz.* knowing that a certain perſon is converted, and delivered from hell, and intitled to heaven, is no divine ſort of knowlege in itſelf. This ſort of fact, is not that which requires no higher or more divine kind of ſuggeſtion, in order to impreſs it on the mind, than any other fact which Balaam had impreſſed on his mind. It requires no higher ſort of idea or ſenſation, for a man to have the apprehenſion of his own converſion impreſſed upon him, than to have the apprehenſion of his neighbor's converſion, in like manner, impreſſed: but God, if he pleaſed, might impreſs the knowlege of this fact, that he had forgiven his neighbor's ſins, and given him a title to heaven, as well as any other fact, without any communication of his holineſs: the excellency and importance of the fact, does not at all hinder a natural man's mind being ſuſceptible of an immediate ſuggeſtion and impreſſion of it. Balaam had as excellent, and important, and glorious facts as this, immediately impreſſed on his mind, without any gracious influence; as particularly, the coming of Chriſt, and his ſetting up his glorious kingdom, and the bleſſedneſs of the ſpiritual Iſrael in his peculiar favor, and their happineſs living and dying. Yea, Abimeleck king of the Philiſtines, had God's ſpecial favor to a particular perſon, even Abraham revealed to him, Gen. xx. 6, 7. So it ſeems that he revealed to Laban his ſpecial favor to Jacob, ſee Gen. xxxi. 24. and Pſal. cv. 15. And if a truly good man ſhould have an immediate revelation or ſuggeſtion from God, after the like manner, concerning his favor to his neighbor, or himſelf; it would be no higher kind of influence; it would be no more than a common ſort of influence of God's Spirit; as the gift of prophecy, and all revelation by immediate ſuggeſtion is; ſee 1 Cor. xiii. 2. And though it be true, that it is not poſſible that a natural man ſhould have that individual ſuggeſtion from the Spirit of God, that he is converted, becauſe it is not true; yet that does not ariſe from the nature of the influence, or becauſe that kind of influence which ſuggeſts ſuch excellent facts, is too high for him to be the ſubject of; but purely from the defect of a fact to be revealed. The influence which immediately ſuggeſts this fact, when it is true, is of no

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different kind from that which immediately ſuggeſts other true facts: and ſo the kind and nature of the influence, is not above what is common to natural men, with good men.

But this is a mean ignoble notion of the witneſs of the Spirit of God given to his dear children, to ſuppoſe that there is nothing in the kind and nature of that influence of the Spirit of God, in imparting this high and glorious benefit, but what is common to natural men, or which men are capable of, and be in the mean time altogether unſanctified, and the children of hell; and that therefore the benefit or gift itſelf has nothing of the holy nature of the Spirit of God in it, nothing of a vital communication of that Spirit. This notion greatly debaſes that high and moſt exalted kind of influence and operation of the Spirit, which there is in the true witneſs of the Spirit†. That which is called *the witneſs of the Spirit*, Rom. viii, is elſewhere in the New Teſtament called *the ſeal of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. i. 22. Eph. i. 13. and iv. 13. alluding to the ſeal of princes, annexed to the inſtrument, by which they advanced any of their ſubjects to ſome high honor and dignity, or peculiar privilege in the kingdom, as a token of their ſpecial favor. Which is an evidence that the influence of the Spirit of the Prince of princes, in ſealing his favorites, is far from being of a common kind;

† The late venerable Stoddard in his younger time, falling in with the opinion of ſome others, received this notion of the witneſs of the Spirit, by way of immediate ſuggeſtion; but in the latter part of his life, when he had more thoroughly weighed things, and had more experience, he entirely rejected it; as appears by his treatiſe of the nature of ſaving converſion, P. 84. "The Spirit of God doth not teſtify to particular perſons, that they are godly. Some think that the Spirit of God doth teſtify it to ſome; and they ground it on Rom. viii. 16. "The Spirit itſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God." They think the Spirit reveals it by giving an inward teſtimony to it; and ſome godly men think they have had experience of it; but they may eaſily miſtake; when the ſpirit of God doth eminently ſtir up a ſpirit of faith, and ſheds abroad the love of God in the heart, it is eaſy to miſtake it as a teſtimony. And that is not the meaning of Paul's words. The Spirit reveals things to us, by opening our eyes to ſee what is revealed in the word; but the Spirit doth not reveal new truths, not revealed in the word. The Spirit diſcovers the grace of God in Chriſt, and thereby draws forth ſpecial actings of faith and love, which are evidential; but it doth not work in way of teſtimony. If God does but help us to receive the revelations in the word, we ſhall have comfort enough without new revelations."

and that there is no effect of God's Spirit whatſoever, which is in its nature more divine; nothing more holy, peculiar, inimitable and diſtinguiſhing of divinity: as nothing is more royal than the royal ſeal; nothing more ſacred, that belongs to a prince, and more peculiarly denoting what belongs to him; it being the very end and deſign of it, to be the moſt peculiar ſtamp and confirmation of the royal authority, and great note of diſtinction, whereby that which proceeds from the king, or belongs to him, may be known from every thing elſe. And therefore undoubtedly the ſeal of the great King of heaven and earth inſtamped on the heart, is ſomething high and holy in its own nature, ſome excellent communication from the infinite fountain of divine beauty and glory; and not merely a making known a ſecret fact by revelation or ſuggeſtion; which is a ſort of influence of the Spirit of God, that the children of the devil have often been the ſubjects of. The ſeal of the Spirit is a kind of effect of the Spirit of God on the heart, which natural men, while ſuch, are ſo far from a capacity of being the ſubjects of, that they can have no manner of notion or idea of it; agreeable to Rev. ii. 17. "To him that overcometh will I give to "eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white ſtone, "and in the ſtone a new name written, which no man know-"eth, ſaving he that receiveth it." There is all reaſon to ſuppoſe that what is here ſpoken of, is the ſame mark, evidence, or bleſſed token of ſpecial favor, which is elſewhere called the *ſeal of the Spirit*.

What has miſled many in their notion of that influence of the Spirit of God we are ſpeaking of, is the word WITNESS, its being called the *witneſs* of the Spirit. Hence they have taken it, not to be any effect or work of the Spirit upon the heart, giving evidence, from whence men may argue that they are the children of God; but an inward immediate ſuggeſtion, as though God inwardly ſpoke to the man, and teſtified to him, and told him that he was his child, by a kind of a ſecret voice, or impreſſion: not obſerving the manner in which the word *witneſs*, or *teſtimony*, is often uſed in the New Teſtament; where ſuch terms often ſignify, not only a mere declaring and aſſerting a thing to be true, but holding forth evidence from whence a thing may be argued and proved to be true. Thus, Heb. ii. 4. God is ſaid to "bear witneſs, with ſigns and wonders, and di-"vers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt." Now theſe miracles, here ſpoken of, are called God's witneſs, not becauſe

they

they are of the nature of aſſertions, but evidences and proofs. So Acts xiv. 3. "Long time therefore abode they ſpeaking bold-
"ly in the Lord, which gave teſtimony unto the word of his
"grace, and granted ſigns and wonders to be done by their
"hands." And John v. 36. "But I have greater witneſs than
"that of John: for the works which the Father hath given
"me to finiſh, the ſame works that I do, bear witneſs of me,
"that the Father hath ſent me. Again, chap. x. 25. "The
"works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witneſs of
"me." So the water and the blood are ſaid to bear witneſs, 1 John v. 8. not that they ſpake or aſſerted any thing, but they were proofs and evidences. So God's works of providence, in the rain and fruitful ſeaſons, are ſpoken of as witneſſes of God's being and goodneſs, *i. e.* they were evidences of theſe things. And when the ſcriptures ſpeaks of the *ſeal* of the Spirit, it is an expreſſion which properly denotes, not an immediate voice or ſuggeſtion, but ſome work or effect of the Spirit, that is left as a divine mark upon the ſoul, to be an evidence, by which God's children might be known. The ſeals of princes were the diſtinguiſhing marks of princes: and thus God's ſeal is ſpoken of as God's mark, Rev. vii. 3. "Hurt not the
"earth, neither the ſea, nor the trees, till we have ſealed the
"ſervants of our God in their foreheads;" together with Ezek. ix. 4. "Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that ſigh,
"and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the
"midſt thereof." When God ſets his ſeal on a man's heart by his Spirit, there is ſome holy ſtamp, ſome image impreſſed and left upon the heart by the Spirit, as by the ſeal upon the wax. And this holy ſtamp, or impreſſed image, exhibiting clear evidence to the conſcience, that the ſubject of it is the child of God, is the very thing which in ſcripture is called *the ſeal of the Spirit*, and *the witneſs*, or *evidence of the Spirit*. And this image inſtamped by the Spirit on God's childrens hearts, is his own image: that is the evidence by which they are known to be God's children, that they have the image of their Father ſtamped upon their hearts by the Spirit of adoption. Seals anciently had engraven on them two things, *viz.* the image, and the name of the perſon whoſe ſeal it was. Therefore when Chriſt ſays to his ſpouſe, Cant. viii. 6. "Set me as
"a ſeal upon thine heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm;" it is as much as to ſay, let my name and image remain impreſſed there. The ſeals of princes were wont to bear their image; ſo that

what

what they ſet their ſeal and royal mark upon, had their image left on it. It was the manner of princes of old to have their image engraven on their jewels and precious ſtones; and the image of Auguſtus engraven on a precious ſtone, was uſed as the ſeal of the Roman emperors, in Chriſt's and the apoſtles times *. And the ſaints are the jewels of Jeſus Chriſt, the great Potentate, who has the poſſeſſion of the empire of the univerſe: and theſe jewels have his image inſtamped upon them, by his royal ſignet, which is the Holy Spirit. And this is undoubtedly what the ſcripture means by the ſeal of the Spirit; eſpecially when it is inſtamped in ſo fair and clear a manner, as to be plain to the eye of conſcience; which is what the ſcripture calls *our ſpirit*. This is truly an affect that is *ſpiritual, ſupernatural* and *divine*. This is in itſelf of a holy nature, being a communication of the divine nature and beauty. That kind of influence of the Spirit which gives and leaves this ſtamp upon the heart, is ſuch that no natural man can be the ſubject of any thing of the like nature with it. This is the higheſt ſort of witneſs of the Spirit, which it is poſſible the ſoul ſhould be the ſubject of: if there were any ſuch thing as a witneſs of the Spirit by immediate ſuggeſtion or revelation, this would be vaſtly more noble and excellent, and as much above it as the heaven is above the earth. This the devil cannot imitate: as to an inward ſuggeſtion of the Spirit of God, by a kind of ſecret voice ſpeaking, and immediately aſſerting and revealing a fact, he can do that which is a thouſand times ſo like to this, as he can to that holy and divine effect, or work of the Spirit of God, which has been now ſpoken of †.

Another

* See Chambers's dictionary, under the word ENGRAVING.

† Mr. Shepard is abundant in militating againſt the notion of mens knowing their good eſtate by an immediate witneſs of the Spirit, without judging by any effect or work of the Spirit wrought on the heart, as an evidence and proof that perſons are the children of God. Parab. P. I. p. 134. "*Knowing your election of God*. How ſo? Immediately? Some divines think angels ſee it not ſo, and that it is peculiar to God ſo to do; but mediately; *for our word came in power, and in much aſſurance*, to make you enlarged for God, to turn you from idols unto God, *&c*—." Again in the ſame page, "It is heaven to cleave to him in every command; it is death to depart from any command. *Hereby know we that we are in him*. If it were poſſible to aſk of the angels, how they know they are not devils, they would

Another thing which is a full proof that the ſeal of the Spirit is no revelation of any fact by immediate ſuggeſtion, but is grace itſelf in the ſoul, is, that the *ſeal of the Spirit* is called the *earneſt of the Spirit*, in the ſcripture. It is very plain, that the ſeal of the Spirit is the ſame thing with the earneſt of the Spirit, by 2 Cor. i. 22. "Who hath alſo ſealed us, and given the "earneſt of the Spirit in our hearts." And Eph. i. 13, 14. "In whom, after that ye believed, ye were ſealed with that "holy Spirit of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inherit-

"ance,

would anſwer the Lord's will is ours. So here, how do you know you have not the nature of devils, and ſo in a ſtate of devils, bound there until the judgment of the great day? Becauſe God hath changed our vile natures, and made our wills like unto his glorious will." And p. 135. "The *major* is the word, the *minor* experience, and the *concluſion* the Lord's Spirit's work, quickening your ſpirits to it. Now, ſay ſome, how do you know this? Thus you may be miſtaken; for many have been deceived thus. Grant that; and ſhall a child not take bread when it is given him, though dogs ſnatch at it?" And p. 137. If you look to a ſpirit without a work, whilſt you do ſeek conſolation, you cannot avoid the condemnation of the word. You ſay the Spirit has ſpoken peace to you; but do you love Chriſt? I look not to that; but to the Spirit. Why, the word ſaith, *He that loves him not, let him be Anathema.* So, Is the league between your ſins and your ſouls broken? Anſ. I look not to that. Why, John ſaith, *He that committeth ſin is of the devil.* Are you new creatures? I look not to that. Why, the word ſaith, *unleſs you be born again*, you cannot enter into the kindom of God." Page 176, 177. "A man ſaith, I have Chriſt; and ſo have not they. I aſk, where is the Spirit? You have the deed; where is the ſeal? You have the teſtator; where is the executor? The Spirit in you? Yes, I have it; it has witneſſed Chriſt is mine. Anſ. It has witneſſed; but what has it wrought? where is the power of his death, killing thy luſts? where is the life of the ſpirit in Jeſus in you? where is the oil in your veſſel? Truly I look for the Bridegroom; but I regard not that; neither are others to regard it, in way of evidence. Then I ſay, the chief evidence is deſtroyed in the churches. I have known many that have had aſſurances; yet never ſaw them prove right, until it witneſſed this was here. What ſhould be the cauſes of this, and that men ſhould make bluſters in the churches becauſe of this, as though it was building on works? In ſeveral men they are ſeveral. 1. An aptneſs to out-run the truth, and to fall from one extreme to another.—2. The apoſtacy of eminent profeſſors, who have been deceived in their evidencing thus.—3. Corrupt experience.—4. A heart that never felt the bitterneſs and bondage of ſin, as the greateſt evil." Page 215, 216. "The

peace,

" ance, until the redemption of the purchaſed poſſeſſion, unt
" the praiſe of his glory." Now the earneſt is part of th
money agreed for, given in hand, as a token of the whole, t
be paid in due time.; a part of the promiſed inheritance, grant
ed now, in token of full poſſeſſion of the whole hereafter. Bu
ſurely that kind of communication of the Spirit of God, whic
is of the nature of eternal glory, is the higheſt and moſt excel
lent kind of communication, ſomething that is in its own na
ture ſpiritual, holy, and divine, and far from any thing that i
common;

peace, and joy, and aſſurance of that glory, which eye never ſaw, in th
ſaints, it is from the witneſs of the Spirit of glory; not only becauſ
that God is their God, but becauſe they are his people. It is I ſay
from the witneſs of God in his word; not from themſelves, nor from
man only, that they approve me; nor from dreams, and diabolica
breathings; but from the Spirit of God; he brings tidings of it; and
from ſuch a ſpirit (that you may know it) that not only ſhews you
God is your God, and ſo you rejoice becauſe of this; for thus it is
with many a carnal heart, and he hath peace, being in horror, from
this, *the Lord loves me*; but he makes you to rejoice, becauſe you
are the Lord's people, becauſe he hath changed your hearts: now the
peace is found, and joy is right: and here I would try the peace of
any man." Part II. p. 168, 169. " All the heirs of the promiſes,
as heirs that have legacies left them, they go to the will of the de-
ceaſed father; and that comforts, that they hold to, that is ſure;
ſuch an one ſhall have it, if his name be there. But if one ſhall ſay,
ſuch a one hath promiſed me ſuch lands: Is it in his will? No; but
ſince he died, as I was taking a pipe, he came to me: Oh be not
deceived!"

Again, in his *Sound Believer*, there is a long diſcourſe of ſanctifi-
cation as the chief evidence of juſtification, from p. 221, for
many pages following; I ſhall tranſcribe but a very ſmall part of it.
" Tell me, how you will know that you are juſtified. You will ſay,
by the teſtimony of the Spirit. And cannot the ſame Spirit ſhine
upon your graces, and witneſs that you are ſanctified, as well?
1 John iv. 13, 24. 1 Cor. ii. 12. Can the Spirit make the one clear
to you, and not the other? Oh beloved, it is a ſad thing, to hear
ſuch queſtions, and ſuch cold anſwers alſo, that ſanctification poſſibly
may be an evidence. May be! Is it not certain? Aſſuredly to deny
it, is as bad as to affirm that God's own promiſes of favor are not
true evidences thereof, and conſequently that they are lies and un-
truths."

Mr. Flavel alſo much oppoſes this notion of the witneſs of the Spi-
rit by immediate revelation. *Sacramental meditations, med.* 4. ſpeaking
of

common; and therefore high above any thing of the nature of inſpiration, or revelation of hidden facts by ſuggeſtion of the Spirit of God, which many natural men have had. What is he earneſt and beginning of glory, but grace itſelf, eſpecially n the more lively and clear exerciſes of it? It is not prophecy, nor tongues, nor knowledge, but that more excellent divine hing, *charity that never faileth*, which is a prelibation and beginning of the light, ſweetneſs, and bleſſedneſs of heaven, hat world of love or charity. It is grace that is the ſeed of glory, and dawning of glory in the heart, and therefore it is

grace

f the ſealing of the Spirit, he ſays, "In ſealing the believer, he oth not make uſe of an audible voice, nor the miniſtry of angels, or immediate and extraordinary revelations; but he makes uſe of his wn graces, implanted in our hearts, and his own promiſes, written n the ſcripture: and in this method, he uſually brings the doubting rembling heart of a believer to reſt and comfort." Again, *ibid.* Aſſurance is produced in our ſouls by the reflexive acts of faith: he Spirit helps us to reflect upon what hath been done by him for- nerly upon our hearts; *hereby we know that we know him*, 1 John . 3. To know that we know, is a reflex act. Now it is impoſſi- le there ſhould be a reflex, before there hath been a direct act. No an can have the evidence of his faith, before the habit is infuſed, nd the vital act performed. The object matter, to which the Spirit eals, is his own ſanctifying operation." Afterwards, *ibid.* he ſays, Immediate ways of the Spirit's ſealing are ceaſed. No man may ow expect, by any new revelation, or ſign from heaven, by any oice, or extraordinary inſpiration, to have his ſalvation ſealed; but uſt expect that mercy in God's ordinary way and method, ſearch- ng the ſcriptures, examining our own hearts, and waiting on the ord in prayer. The learned Gerſon gives an inſtance of one that ad been long upon the borders of deſpair, and at laſt ſweetly aſſured nd ſettled: he anſwered, *Non ex nova aliqua revelatione*; not by any ew revelation, but by ſubjecting my underſtanding to, and compa- ng my heart with the written word. And Mr. Roberts, in his trea- ſe of *the covenants*, ſpeaks of another, that ſo vehemently pant d af- er the ſealings and aſſurance of the love of God to his ſoul, that for long time he earneſtly deſired ſome voice from heaven; and ſome- mes, walking in the ſolitary fields, earneſtly deſired ſome miracu- ous voice, from the trees or ſtones there. This was denied him; ut in time, a better was afforded, in a ſcriptural way." Again, *ibid.* This method of ſealing, is beyond all other methods in the world. or in miraculous voices and inſpirations, it is poſſible there may *ſu- eſſe falſum*, be found ſome cheat, or impoſtures of the devil: but the pirit's witneſs in the heart, ſuitable to the revelation in the ſcripture, annot deceive us."

grace that is the earneſt of the future inheritance. What is i
that is the beginning or earneſt of eternal life in the ſoul, bu
ſpiritual life? and what is that but grace? The inheritance tha
Chriſt has purchaſed for the elect, is the Spirit of God; no
in any extraordinary gifts, but in his vital indwelling in the
heart, exerting and communicating himſelf there, in his own
proper, holy or divine nature: and this is the ſum total of the
inheritance that Chriſt purchaſed for the elect. For ſo are
things conſtituted in the affair of our redemption, that the Fa-
ther provides the Saviour, or purchaſer, and the purchaſe is
made of him; and the Son is the purchaſer and the price; and
the Holy Spirit is the great bleſſing or inheritance purchaſed,
as is intimated Gal. iii. 13, 14. and hence the Spirit is often
ſpoken of as the ſum of the bleſſings promiſed in the goſpel,
Luke xxiv. 49. Acts i. 4. and chap ii. 38, 39. Gal. iii. 14.
Eph. i. 13. This inheritance was the grand legacy which
Chriſt left his diſciples and church, in his laſt will and teſta-
ment, John, chap. xiv. xv. xvi. This is the ſum of the bleſſings
of eternal life, which ſhall be given in heaven. (Compare
John vii. 37, 38, 39. and John iv. 14. with Rev. xxi. 6. and
xxii. 1, 17.) It is through the vital communications and in-
dwelling of the Spirit, that the ſaints have all their light, life,
holineſs, beauty, and joy in heaven: and it is through the vi-
tal communications and indwelling of the ſame Spirit, that the
ſaints have all light, life, holineſs, beauty and comfort on
earth; but only communicated in leſs meaſure. And this vi-
tal indwelling of the Spirit in the ſaints, in this leſs meaſure
and ſmall beginning, is *the earneſt of the Spirit, the earneſt of
the future inheritance, and the firſt-fruits of the Spirit*, as the
apoſtle calls it, Rom. viii. 22. where, by *the firſt-fruits of the
Spirit*, the apoſtle undoubtedly means the ſame vital gracious
principle, that he ſpeaks of in all the preceding part of the
chapter, which he calls Spirit, and ſets in oppoſition to fleſh
or corruption. Therefore this earneſt of the Spirit, and firſt-
fruits of the Spirit, which has been ſhown to be the ſame with
the ſeal of the Spirit, is the vital gracious ſanctifying commu-
nication and influence of the Spirit, and not any immediate
ſuggeſtion or revelation of facts by the Spirit ‡.

And

‡ "After a man is in Chriſt, not to judge by the work, is not to judge by the Spirit. For the apoſtle makes the earneſt of the Spirit to be the ſeal. Now earneſt is part of the money bargained for; the beginning

And indeed the apoſtle, when in that Rom. viii. 16. he ſpeaks of the Spirit's bearing witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God, does ſufficiently explain himſelf, if his words were but attended to. What is here expreſſed, is connected with the two preceding verſes, as reſulting from what the apoſtle had ſaid there, as every reader may ſee. The three verſes together are thus, *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the ſons of God : for ye have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father : the Spirit itſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God.* Here, what the apoſtle ſays, if we take it together, plainly ſhews, that what he has reſpect to, when he ſpeaks of the Spirit's giving us witneſs or evidence that we are God's children, is his dwelling in us, and leading us, as a ſpirit of adoption, or ſpirit of a child, diſpoſing us to behave towards God as to a Father. This is the witneſs or evidence the apoſtle ſpeaks of, that we *are children*, that we *have the ſpirit of children*, or ſpirit of adoption. And what is that, but the ſpirit of love? There are two kinds of ſpirits the apoſtle ſpeaks of, the ſpirit of a ſlave, or *the ſpirit of bondage*, that is *fear*; and the ſpirit of a child, or *ſpirit of adoption*, and that is *love*. The apoſtle ſays, we have not received the ſpirit of bondage, or of ſlaves, which is a ſpirit of fear; but we have received the more ingenuous noble ſpirit of children, a ſpirit of love, which naturally diſpoſes us to go to God, as children to a father, and behave towards God as children. And this is the evidence or witneſs which the Spirit of God gives us that we are children. This is the plain ſenſe of the apoſtle: and ſo undoubtedly the apoſtle here is ſpeaking of the very ſame way of caſting out doubting, and *fear*, and the ſpirit of bondage, which the apoſtle John ſpeaks of, 1 John iv. 18. *viz.* by the prevailing of *love*, that is the ſpirit of a child. The ſpirit of bondage works by fear, the ſlave fears the rod; but love cries *Abba, Father*; it diſpoſes us to go to God, and behave ourſelves towards God as children; and it gives us clear evidence of our union to God as his children, and ſo caſts out fear. So that it appears that the witneſs of the Spirit the apoſtle

beginning of heaven, of the light and life of it. He that ſees not that the Lord is his by that, ſees no God his at all. Oh therefore, do not look for a ſpirit, without a word to reveal, nor a word to reveal, without ſeeing and feeling of ſome work firſt. I thank the Lord, I do but pity thoſe that think otherwiſe. If a ſheep of Chriſt, oh, wander not." *Shepard's Parab.* P. I. p. 86.

ſpeaks of, is far from being any whiſper, or immediate ſuggeſtion or revelation ; but that gracious holy effect of the Spirit of God in the hearts of the ſaints, the diſpoſition and temper of children, appearing in ſweet child-like love to God, which caſts out fear, or a ſpirit of a ſlave.

And the ſame thing is evident from all the context : it is plain the apoſtle ſpeaks of the Spirit, over and over again, as dwelling in the hearts of the ſaints, as a gracious principle, ſet in oppoſition to the fleſh or corruption : and ſo he does in the words that immediately introduce this paſſage we are upon, verſ. 13. *For if ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die : but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the fleſh, ye ſhall live.*

Indeed it is paſt doubt with me, that the apoſtle has a more ſpecial reſpect to the ſpirit of grace, or the ſpirit of love, or ſpirit of a child, in its more lively actings ; for it is *perfect love* or *ſtrong love* only, which ſo witneſſes or evidences that we are children, as to caſt out fear, and wholly deliver from the ſpirit of bondage. The ſtrong and lively exerciſes of a ſpirit of child-like, evangelical, humble love to God, give clear evidence of the ſoul's relation to God, as his child ; which does very greatly and directly ſatisfy the ſoul. And though it be far from being true, that the ſoul in this caſe, judges only by an immediate witneſs, without any ſign or evidence ; for it judges and is aſſured by the greateſt ſign and cleareſt evidence ; yet in this caſe, the ſaint ſtands in no need of multiplied ſigns, or any long reaſoning upon them. And though the ſight of his *relative union* with God, and his being in his favor, is not without a medium, becauſe he ſees it by that medium, *viz.* his love ; yet his ſight of the *union of his heart* to God is immediate : love, the bond of union, is ſeen intuitively : the ſaint ſees and feels plainly the union between his ſoul and God ; it is ſo ſtrong and lively, that he cannot doubt of it. And hence he is aſſured that he is a child. How can he doubt whether he ſtands in a child-like relation to God, when he plainly ſees a child-like union between God and his ſoul, and hence does boldly, and as it were naturally and neceſſarily cry, *Abba, Father ?*

And whereas the apoſtle ſays, the Spirit bears witneſs *with our Spirits :* by *our ſpirit* here, is meant our conſcience, which is called the ſpirit of man ; Prov. xx. 27. " The ſpirit of man is " the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the " belly." We elſewhere read of the witneſs of this ſpirit of ours ; 2 Cor. i. 12. " For our rejoicing is this, the teſtimony of our con- " ſcience." And 1 John iii. 19, 20, 21. " And hereby do we know " that we are of the truth, and ſhall aſſure our hearts before him.

" For

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and "knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then "have we confidence towards God." When the apoſtle Paul ſpeaks of the Spirit of God bearing witneſs with our ſpirit, he is not to be underſtood of two ſpirits, that are two ſeparate, collateral, independent witneſſes; but it is by one, that we receive the witneſſes of the other: the Spirit of God gives the evidence, by infuſing and ſhedding abroad the love of God, the ſpirit of a child, in the heart; and our ſpirit, or our conſcience, receives and declares this evidence for our rejoicing.

Many have been the miſchiefs that have ariſen from that falſe and deluſive notion of the witneſs of the Spirit, that it is a kind of inward voice, ſuggeſtion, or declaration from God to a man, that he is beloved of him, and pardoned, elected, or the like, ſometimes with, and ſometimes without a text of ſcripture; and many have been the falſe, and vain, (though very high) affections that have ariſen from hence. And it is to be feared that multitudes of ſouls have been eternally undone by it. I have therefore inſiſted the longer on this head.

But I proceed now to a ſecond characteriſtic of gracious affections.

II. The firſt objective ground of gracious affections, is the tranſcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things, as they are in themſelves; and not any conceived relation they bear to ſelf, or ſelf-intereſt.

I ſay, that the ſupremely excellent nature of divine things, is the *firſt*, or *primary and original* objective foundation of the ſpiritual affections of true ſaints; for I do not ſuppoſe that all relation which divine things bear to themſelves, and their own particular intereſt, are wholly excluded from all influence in their gracious affections. For this may have, and indeed has, a ſecondary and conſequential influence in thoſe affections that are truly holy and ſpiritual; as I ſhall ſhew how by and by.

It was before obſerved, that the affection of love is as it were the fountain of all affection; and particularly, that Chriſtian love is the fountain of all gracious affections: now the divine excellency and glory of God, and Jeſus Chriſt, the word of God, the works of God, and the ways of God, *&c.* is the primary reaſon, why a true ſaint loves theſe things; and not any ſuppoſed intereſt that he has in them, or any conceived benefit that he has received from them, or ſhall receive from them, or any ſuch imagined relation which they bear to his intereſt, that ſelf-love can properly be ſaid to be the firſt foundation of his love to theſe things.

Some

Some ſay that all love ariſes from ſelf-love; and that it is impoſſible in the nature of things, for any man to have any love to God, or any other being, but that love to himſelf muſt be the foundation of it. But I humbly ſuppoſe it is for want of conſideration, that they ſay ſo. They argue, that whoever loves God, and ſo deſires his glory, or the enjoyment of him, he deſires theſe things as his own happineſs; the glory of God, and the beholding and enjoying his perfections, are conſidered as things *agreeable to him*, tending to make him happy; he places his happineſs in them, and deſires them as things, which (if they were obtained) would be delightful to him, or would fill him with delight and joy, and ſo make him happy. And ſo, they ſay, it is from ſelf-love, or a deſire of his own happineſs, that he deſires God ſhould be glorified, and deſires to behold and enjoy his glorious perfections. But then they ought to conſider a little further, and inquire how the man came *to place his happineſs* in God's being glorified, and in contemplating and enjoying God's perfections. There is no doubt, but that after God's glory, and the beholding his perfections, are become ſo agreeable to him, that he places his higheſt happineſs in theſe things, then he will deſire them, as he deſires his own happineſs. But how came theſe things to be ſo agreeable to him, that he eſteems it his higheſt happineſs to glorify God, *&c?* is not this the fruit of love? a man muſt firſt love God, or have his heart united to him, before he will eſteem God's good his own, and before he will deſire the glorifying and enjoying of God, as his happineſs. It is not ſtrong arguing, that becauſe *after* a man has his heart united to God in love, *as a fruit of this*, he deſires his glory and enjoyment as his own happineſs, that therefore a deſire of this happineſs of his own, muſt needs be the *cauſe and foundation* of his love: unleſs it be ſtrong arguing, that becauſe a father begat a ſon, that therefore his ſon certainly begat him. If *after* a man loves God, and has his heart ſo united to him, as to look upon God as his chief good, and on God's good as his own, it will be a *conſequence and fruit of this*, that even ſelf-love, or love to his own happineſs, will cauſe him to deſire the glorifying and enjoying of God: it will not thence follow, that this very exerciſe of ſelf-love, went *before* his love to God, and that his love to God was a *conſequence and fruit of that*. Something elſe, entirely diſtinct from ſelf-love, might be the cauſe of this, *viz.* a change made in the views of his mind, and reliſh of his heart; whereby he apprehends a beauty, glory, and ſupreme good, in God's nature, as it is in itſelf. This may be the thing that firſt draws

his

his heart to his, and cauſes his heart to be united to him prior to all conſiderations of his own intereſt or happineſs, although after this, and as a fruit of this, he neceſſarily ſeeks his intereſt and happineſs in God.

There is ſuch a thing, as a kind of love or affection, that a man may have towards perſons or things, which *does properly ariſe from* ſelf-love; a preconceived relation to him, or ſome benefit already received or depended on, *is truly the firſt foundation* of his love, and what his affection does wholly ariſe from; and is what precedes any reliſh of, or delight in the nature and qualities inherent in the being beloved, as beautiful and amiable. When the firſt thing that draws a man's benevolence, to another, is the beholding thoſe qualifications and properties in him, which appear to him lovely in themſelves, and the ſubject of them, on this account, worthy of eſteem and good-will, love ariſes in a very different manner, than when it firſt ariſes from ſome gift beſtowed by another, or depended on from him, as a judge loves and favors a man that has bribed him; or from the relation he ſuppoſes another has to him, as a man who loves another, becauſe he looks upon him as his child. When love to another ariſes thus, it does truly and properly ariſe from ſelf-love.

That kind of affection to God or Jeſus Chriſt, which does thus properly ariſe from ſelf-love, cannot be a truly gracious and ſpiritual love; as appears from what has been ſaid already: for ſelf-love is a principle entirely natural, and as much in the hearts of devils as angels; and therefore ſurely nothing that is the mere reſult of it, can be ſupernatural and divine, in the manner before deſcribed†. Chriſt plainly ſpeaks of this kind of love, as what is nothing beyond the love of wicked men, Luke vi. 32. "If ye love him that love you, what thank have "ye? for ſinners alſo love thoſe that love them." And the devil himſelf knew that that kind of reſpect to God which was ſo mercenary, as to be only for benefits received or depended on, (which is all one) is worthleſs in the ſight of God: otherwiſe he never would have made uſe of ſuch a ſlander before God, againſt Job, as in Job i. 9, 10. "Doth Job ſerve God "for nought? haſt not thou made an hedge about him, and "about

† "There is a natural love to Chriſt, as to one that doth thee good, and for thine own ends; and ſpiritual, for himſelf, whereby the Lord only is exalted." *Shepard' Par. of the ten Virgins*, P. I. p. 25.

" about his houſe?" &c.—Nor would God ever have implicit
ly allowed the objection to have been good, in caſe the accu
ſation had been true, by allowing that that matter ſhould b
tried, and that Job ſhould be ſo delt with, that it might appea
in the event, whether Job's reſpect to God was thus mercena
ry or no, and by putting the proof of the ſincerity and good
neſs of his reſpect, upon that iſſue.

It is unreaſonable to think otherwiſe, than that the firſ
foundation of a true love to God, is that whereby he is in him
ſelf lovely, or worthy to be loved, or the ſupreme loveline
of his nature. This is certainly what makes him chiefly ami
able. What chiefly makes a man, or any creature lovely, i
his excellency; and ſo what chiefly renders God lovely, an
muſt undoubtedly be the chief ground of true love, is his ex
cellency. God's nature, or the divinity, is infinitely excel
lent; yea it is infinite beauty, brightneſs, and glory itſelf. Bu
how can that be *true love* of this excellent and lovely nature
which is not built on the foundation of *its true loveline/s*? how
can that be true love of beauty and brightneſs, which is no
for beauty and brightneſs ſake? how can that be a true prizing
of that which is in itſelf infinitely worthy and precious, which
is not for the ſake of its worthineſs and precioufneſs? this in-
finite excellency of the divine nature, as it is in itſelf, is the
true ground of all that is good in God in any reſpect; but how
can a man truly and rightly love God, without loving him for
that excellency in him, which is the foundation of all that is
in any manner of reſpect good or deſirable in him? they whoſe
affection to God is founded firſt on his profitableneſs to them,
their affection begins at the wrong end; they regard God only
for the utmoſt limit of the ſtream of divine good, where it
touches them, and reaches their intereſt? and have no reſpect
to that infinite glory of God's nature, which is the original good
and the true fountain of all good, the firſt fountain of all love-
lineſs of every kind, and ſo the firſt foundation of all true love.

A natural principle of ſelf-love may be the foundation of
great affections toward God and Chriſt, without ſeeing any
thing of the beauty and glory of the divine nature. There is a
certain gratitude that is a mere natural thing. Gratitude is
one of the natural affections of the ſoul of man, as well as an-
ger; and there is a gratitude that ariſes from ſelf-love, very
much in the ſame manner that anger does. Anger in men is
an affection excited *againſt* another, or in oppoſition to another,

for

or ſomething in him that croſſes ſelf-love: gratitude is an af- ction one has *towards* another, for loving him, or gratifying im, or for ſomething in him that ſuits ſelf-love. And there ay be a kind of gratitude, without any true or proper love; there may be anger without any proper hatred, as in parents owards their children, that they may be angry with, and yet the ſame time have a ſtrong habitual love to them. This ratitude is the principle which is in exerciſe in wicked men, that which Chriſt declares concerning them, in the 6th of uke, where he ſays, *Sinners love thoſe that love them*; and hich he declares concerning even the publicans, who were me of the moſt carnal and profligate ſort of men, Matt. v. 6. This is the very principle that is wrought upon by bribe-, in unjuſt judges; and it is a principle that even the brute eaſts do exerciſe; a dog will love his maſter that is kind to m. And we ſee in innumerable inſtances, that mere nature ſufficient to excite gratitude in men, or to affect their hearts ith thankfulneſs to others for kindneſſes received: and ſome- nes towards them, whom at the ſame time they have an ha- tual enmity againſt. Thus Saul was once and again greatly fected, and even diſſolved with gratitude towards David, for aring his life; and yet remained an habitual enemy to him. nd as men, from mere nature, may be thus affected towards en; ſo they may towards God. There is nothing hinders, t that the ſame ſelf-love may work after the ſame manner to- ards God, as towards man. And we have manifeſt inſtances it in ſcripture; as indeed the children of Iſrael, *who ſang d's praiſes* at the red ſea, *but ſoon forgat God's works:* and Naaman the Syrian, who was greatly affected with the mi- culous cure of his leproſy, ſo as to have his heart engaged enceforward to worſhip the God that had healed him, and m only, excepting when it would expoſe him to be ruined in temporal intereſt. So was Nebuchadnezzar greatly affect- with God's goodneſs to him, in reſtoring him to his reaſon d kingdom, after his dwelling with the beaſts.

Gratitude being thus a natural principle, it renders ingratitude much the more vile and heinous; becauſe it ſhews a dread- prevalence of wickedneſs, when it even overbears, and ſup- eſſes the better principles of human nature: as it is mention- as an evidence of the high degree of the wickedneſs of many the heathen, that they were *without natural affection*, Rom. 31. But that the want of gratitude, or natural affection,

are

are evidences of an high degree of *vice*, is no argument tha all gratitude and natural affection, has the nature of *virtue*, o *ſaving grace*.

Self-love, through the exerciſe of a mere natural gratitude may be the foundation of a ſort of love to God many ways A kind of love may ariſe from a falſe notion of God, that me have been educated in, or have ſome way imbibed; as thoug he were only goodneſs and mercy, and no revenging juſtice or as though the exerciſes of his goodneſs were neceſſary, an not free and ſovereign; or as though his goodneſs were depen dent on what is in them, and as it were conſtrained by then Men on ſuch grounds as theſe, may love a God of their ow forming in their imaginations, when they are far from lovin ſuch a God as reigns in heaven.

Again, ſelf-love may be the foundation of an affection i men towards God, through a great inſenſibility of their ſta with regard to God, and for want of conviction of conſcienc to make them ſenſible how dreadfully they have provoked Go to anger; they have no ſenſe of the heinouſneſs of ſin, a againſt God, and of the infinite and terrible oppoſition of th holy nature of God againſt it: and ſo having formed in the minds ſuch a God as ſuits them, and thinking God to be ſuc an one as themſelves, who favours and agrees with them, the may like him very well, and feel a ſort of love to him, whe they are far from loving the true God. And mens affection may be much moved towards God, from ſelf-love, by ſom remarkable outward benefits received from God; as it was wi Naaman, Nebuchadnezzar, and the children of Iſrael at th Red ſea.

Again, a very high affection towards God, may, and ofte does ariſe in men, from an opinion of the favour and love God to them, as the firſt foundation of their love to him. Aft awakenings and diſtreſs through fears of hell, they may ſu denly get a notion, through ſome impreſſion on their imagin tion, or immediate ſuggeſtion with or without texts of ſcriptur or by ſome other means, that God loves them, and has fo given their ſins, and made them his children; and this is th firſt thing that cauſes their affections to flow towards God an Jeſus Chriſt: and then after this, and upon this foundatio many things in God may appear lovely to them, and Chri may ſeem excellent. And if ſuch perſons are aſked, wheth God appears lovely and amiable in himſelf? they would pe haps

haps readily anſwer, Yes; when indeed, if the matter be ſtrictly examined, this good opinion of God was purchaſed and paid for before ever they afforded it, in the diſtinguiſhing and infinite benefits they imagined they received from God: and they allow God to be lovely in himſelf, no otherwiſe, than that he has forgiven them, and accepted them, and loves them above moſt in the world, and has engaged to improve all his infinite power and wiſdom in preferring, dignifying and exalting them, and will do for them juſt as they would have him. When once they are firm in this apprehenſion, it is eaſy to own God and Chriſt to be lovely and glorious, and to admire and extol them. It is eaſy for them to own Chriſt to be a lovely perſon, and the beſt in the world, when they are firſt firm in it, that he, though Lord of the univerſe, is captivated with love to them, and has his heart ſwallowed up in them, and prizes them far beyond moſt of their neighbours, and loved them from eternity, and died for them, and will make them reign in eternal glory with him in heaven. When this is the caſe with carnal men, their very luſts will make him ſeem lovely: pride itſelf will prejudice them in favor of that which they call Chriſt: ſelfiſh proud man naturally calls that lovely that greatly contributes to his intereſt, and gratifies his ambition.

And as this ſort of perſons begin, ſo they go on. Their affections are raiſed from time to time, primarily on this foundation of ſelf-love and a conceit of God's love to them. Many have a falſe notion of communion with God, as though it were carried on by impulſes, and whiſpers, and external repreſentations, immediately made to their imagination. Theſe things they often have; which they take to be manifeſtations of God's great love to them, and evidences of their high exaltation above others of mankind; and ſo their affections are often renewedly ſet a-going.

Whereas the exerciſes of true and holy love in the ſaints ariſe in another way. They do not firſt ſee that God loves them, and then ſee that he is lovely; but they firſt ſee that God is lovely, and that Chriſt is excellent and glorious, and their hearts are firſt captivated with this view, and the exerciſes of their love are wont from time to time to begin here, and to ariſe primarily from theſe views; and then, conſequentially, they ſee God's love, and great favour to them. † The ſaint's

† "There is a ſeeing of Chriſt after a man believes, which is Chriſt in his love, &c. But I ſpeak of that firſt ſight of him that precedes

affections begin with God; and ſelf-love has a hand in theſe affections conſequentially, and ſecondarily only. On the contrary, thoſe falſe affections begin with ſelf, and an acknowlegement of an excellency in God, and an affectedneſs with it, is only conſequential and dependent. In the love of the true ſaint God is the loweſt foundation; the love of the excellency of his nature is the foundation of all the affections which come afterwards, wherein ſelf-love is concerned as an handmaid: on the contrary, the hypocrite lays himſelf at the bottom of all, as the firſt foundation, and lays on God as the ſuperſtructure; and even his acknowlegement of God's glory itſelf, depends on his regard to his private intereſt.

Self-love may not only influence men, ſo as to cauſe them to be affected with God's kindneſs to them ſeparately; but alſo with God's kindneſs to them, as parts of a community: as a natural principle of ſelf-love, without any other principle, may be ſufficient to make a man concerned for the intereſt of the nation to which he belongs: as for inſtance, in the preſent war, ſelf-love may make natural men rejoice at the ſucceſſes of our nation, and ſorry for their diſadvantages, they being concerned as members of the body. So the ſame natural principles may extend further, and even to the world of mankind, and might be affected with the benefits the inhabitants of the earth have, beyond thoſe of the inhabitants of other planets; if we knew that ſuch there were, and knew how it was with them. So this principle may cauſe men to be affected with the benefits that mankind have received beyond the fallen angels. And hence men, from this principle, may be much affected with the wonderful goodneſs of God to mankind, his great goodneſs in giving his Son to die for fallen man, and the marvellous love of Chriſt in ſuffering ſuch great things for us, and with the great glory they hear God has provided in heaven for us; looking on themſelves as perſons concerned and intereſted, as being ſome of this ſpecies of creatures, ſo highly favoured: the ſame principle of natural gratitude may influence men here, as in the caſe of perſonal benefits.

But theſe things that I have ſaid do by no means imply that all gratitude to God is a mere natural thing, and that there is no

cedes the ſecond act of faith; and it is an intuitive, or real ſight of him, as he is in his glory." *Shepard's Parable of the ten Virgins*, Part I. p. 74.

no ſuch thing as a ſpiritual gratitude, which is a holy and divine affection: they imply no more, than that there is a gratitude which is merely natural, and that when perſons have affections towards God only or primarily for benefits received, their affection is only the exerciſe of a natural gratitude. There is doubtleſs ſuch a thing as a gracious gratitude, which does greatly differ from all that gratitude which natural men experience. It differs in the following reſpects:

1. True gratitude or thankfulneſs to God for his kindneſs to us, ariſes from a foundation laid before, of love to God for what he is in himſelf; whereas a natural gratitude has no ſuch antecedent foundation. The gracious ſtirrings of grateful affection to God, for kindneſs received, always are from a ſtock of love already in the heart, eſtabliſhed in the firſt place on other grounds, *viz.* God's own excellency; and hence the affections are diſpoſed to flow out, on occaſions of God's kindneſs. The ſaint having ſeen the glory of God, and his heart overcome by it, and captivated into a ſupreme love to him on that account, his heart hereby becomes tender, and eaſily affected with kindneſſes received. If a man has no love to another, yet gratitude may be moved by ſome extraordinary kindneſs; as in Saul towards David: but this is not the ſame kind of thing, as a man's gratitude to a dear friend, that his heart was before poſſeſſed with a high eſteem of, and love to; whoſe heart by this means became tender towards him, and more eaſily affected with gratitude, and affected in another manner. Self-love is not excluded from a gracious gratitude; the ſaints love God for his kindneſs to them, Pſal. cxvi. 1. "I love the "Lord, becauſe he hath heard the voice of my ſupplication." But ſomething elſe is included; and another love prepares the way and lays the foundation for theſe grateful affections.

2. In a gracious gratitude, men are affected with the attribute of God's goodneſs and free grace, not only as they are concerned in it, or as it affects their intereſt, but as a part of the glory and beauty of God's nature. That wonderful and unparallelled grace of God, which is manifeſted in the work of redemption, and ſhines forth in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, is infinitely glorious in itſelf, and appears ſo to the angels; it is a great part of the moral perfection and beauty of God's nature. This would be glorious, whether it were exerciſed towards us

or no; and the ſaint who exerciſes a gracious thankfulneſs for it, ſees it to be ſo, and delights in it as ſuch; though his concern in it ſerves the more to engage his mind, and raiſe the attention and affection; and ſelf-love here aſſiſts as an handmaid, being ſubſervient to higher principles, to lead forth the mind to the view and contemplation, and engage and fix the attention, and heighten the joy and love. God's kindneſs to them is a glaſs that God ſets before them, wherein to behold the beauty of the attribute of God's goodneſs: the exerciſes and diſplays of this attribute, by this means, are brought near to them, and ſet right before them. So that in a holy thankfulneſs to God, the concern our intereſt has in God's goodneſs, is not the firſt foundation of our being affected with it; that was laid in the heart before, in that ſtock of love which was to God, for his excellency in himſelf, that makes the heart tender, and ſuſceptive of ſuch impreſſions from his goodneſs to us. Nor is our own intereſt, or the benefits we have received, the only, or the chief objective ground of the preſent exerciſes of the affection, but God's goodneſs, as part of the beauty of his nature; although the manifeſtations of that lovely attribute, ſet immediately before our eyes, in the exerciſes of it for us, be the ſpecial occaſion of the mind's attention to that beauty, at that time and ſerves to fix the attention, and heighten the affection.

Some may perhaps be ready to object againſt the whole that has been ſaid, that text, 1 John iv. 19. "We love him becauſe "he firſt loved us," as though this implied that God's love to the true ſaints were the *firſt foundation* of their love to him.

In anſwer to this I would obſerve, that the apoſtle's drift in theſe words, is to magnify the love of God to us from hence, that he loved us, while we had no love to him; as will be manifeſt to any one who compares this verſe and the two following, with the 9th, 10th, and 11th verſes. And that God loved us, when we had no love to him, the apoſtle proves by this argument, that God's love to the elect, is the ground of their love to him. And that it is three ways. 1. The ſaints love to God is the fruit of God's love to them, as it is the gift of that love. God gave them a ſpirit of love to him, becauſe he loved them from eternity. And in this reſpect God's love to his elect is the firſt foundation of their love to him, as it is the foundation of their regeneration, and the whole of their redemption. 2. The exerciſes and diſcoveries that God has made of his wonderful love to ſinful men, by Jeſus Chriſt, in the work of redemption,

demption, is one of the chief manifeſtations, which God has made of the glory of his moral perfection, to both angels and men; and ſo is one main objective ground of the love of both to God; in a good conſiſtence with what was ſaid before. 3. God's love to a particular elect perſon, diſcovered by his converſion, is a great manifeſtation of God's moral perfection and glory to him, and a proper occaſion of the excitation of the love of holy gratitude, agreeable to what was before ſaid. And that the ſaints do in theſe reſpects love God, becauſe he firſt loved them, fully anſwers the deſign of the apoſtle's argument in that place. So that no good argument can be drawn from hence, againſt a ſpiritual and gracious love in the ſaints, ariſing primarily from the excellency of divine things, as they are in themſelves, and not from any conceived relation they bear to their intereſt.

And as it is with the love of the ſaints, ſo it is with their joy, and ſpiritual delight and pleaſure: the firſt foundation of it is not any conſideration or conception of their intereſt in divine things; but it primarily conſiſts in the ſweet entertainment their minds have in the view or contemplation of the divine and holy beauty of theſe things, as they are in themſelves. And this is indeed the very main difference between the joy of the hypocrite, and the joy of the true ſaint. The former rejoices in himſelf; ſelf is the firſt foundation of his joy: the latter rejoices in God. The hypocrite has his mind pleaſed and delighted, in the firſt place, with his own privilege, and the happineſs which he ſuppoſes he has attained to, or ſhall attain to. True ſaints have their minds, in the firſt place, inexpreſſibly pleaſed and delighted with the ſweet ideas of the glorious and amiable nature of the things of God. And this is the ſpring of all their delights, and the cream of all their pleaſures; it is the joy of their joy. This ſweet and raviſhing entertainment, they have in the view of the beautiful and delightful nature of divine things, is the foundation of the joy that they have afterwards, in the conſideration of their being theirs. But the dependence of the affections of hypocrites is in a contrary order; they firſt rejoice and are elevated with it, that they are made ſo much of by God; and then on that ground, he ſeems after a ſort, lovely to them.

The firſt foundation of the delight a true ſaint has in God, is his own perfection; and the firſt foundation of the delight he has in Chriſt, is his own beauty; he appears in himſelf the chief

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among ten thouſand, and altogether lovely. The way of ſalvation by Chriſt is a delightful way to him, for the ſweet and admirable manifeſtations of the divine perfections in it: the holy doctrines of the goſpel, by which God is exalted and man abaſed, holineſs honoured and promoted, and ſin greatly diſgraced and diſcouraged, and free and ſovereign love manifeſted, are glorious doctrines in his eyes, and ſweet to his taſte, prior to any conception of his intereſt in theſe things. Indeed the ſaints rejoice in their intereſt in God, and that Chriſt is theirs; and ſo they have great reaſon: but this is not the firſt ſpring of their joy. They firſt rejoice in God as glorious and excellent in himſelf, and then ſecondarily rejoice in it, that ſo glorious a God is theirs. They firſt have their hearts filled with ſweetneſs, from the view of Chriſt's excellency, and the excellency of his grace, and the beauty of the way of ſalvation by him, and then they have a ſecondary joy, in that ſo excellent a Saviour, and ſuch excellent grace is theirs.* But that which is the true ſaint's ſuperſtructure is the hypocrite's foundation. When they hear of the wonderful things of the goſpel, of God's great love in ſending his Son, of Chriſt's dying love to ſinners, and the great things Chriſt has purchaſed, and promiſed to the ſaints, and hear theſe things livelily and eloquently ſet forth; they may hear with a great deal of pleaſure, and be lifted up with

* Dr. Owen on *the Spirit*, p. 199. ſpeaking of a common work of the Spirit, ſays, "The effects of this work on the mind, which is the firſt ſubject affected with it, proceeds not ſo far, as to give it delight, complacency, and ſatisfaction, in the lovely ſpiritual nature and excellencies of the things revealed unto it. The true nature of ſaving illumination conſiſts in this, that it gives the mind ſuch a direct intuitive inſight and proſpect into ſpiritual things, as that in their own ſpiritual nature they ſuit, pleaſe, and ſatisfy it; ſo that it is transformed into them, caſt into the mould of them, and reſts in them; Rom. vi. 17. chap. xii. 2. 1 Cor. ii. 13, 14. 2 Cor. iii. 18. chap. iv. 6. This, the work we have inſiſted on, reacheth not unto. For notwithſtanding any diſcovery that is made therein of ſpiritual things unto the mind, it finds not an immediate, direct, ſpiritual excellency in them; but only with reſpect unto ſome benefit or advantage, which is to be attained by means thereof. It will not give ſuch a ſpiritual inſight into the myſtery of God's grace by Jeſus Chriſt, called his glory ſhining in the face of Chriſt, 2 Cor. iv. 6. as that the ſoul, in its firſt direct view of it, ſhould, for what it is in itſelf, admire it, delight in it, approve it, and find ſpiritual ſolace, with refreſhment, in it. But ſuch a light, ſuch a knowlege, it communicates, as that a man may like it well in its effects, as a way of mercy and ſalvation."

with what they hear; but if their joy be examined, it will be found to have no other foundation than this, that they look upon theſe things as theirs, all this exalts them, they love to hear of the great love of Chriſt ſo vaſtly diſtinguiſhing ſome from others; for ſelf-love, and even pride itſelf, makes them affect great diſtinction from others. No wonder, in this confident opinion of their own good eſtate, that they feel well under ſuch doctrine, and are pleaſed in the higheſt degree, in hearing how much God and Chriſt makes of them. So that their joy is really a joy in themſelves, and not in God.

And becauſe the joy of hypocrites is in themſelves, hence it comes to paſs, that in their rejoicings and elevations, they are wont to keep their eye upon themſelves; having received what they call ſpiritual diſcoveries or experiences, their minds are taken up about them, admiring their own experiences: and what they are principally taken and elevated with, is not the glory of God, or beauty of Chriſt, but the beauty of their experiences. They keep thinking with themſelves, what a good experience is this! what a great diſcovery is this! what wonderful things have I met with! and ſo they put their experiences in the place Chriſt, and his beauty and fulneſs; and inſtead of rejoicing in Chriſt Jeſus, they rejoice in their admirable experiences; inſtead of feeding and feaſting their ſouls in the view of what is without them, *viz.* the innate, ſweet, refreſhing amiableneſs of the things exhibited in the goſpel, their eyes are off from theſe things, or at leaſt they view them only as it were ſide-ways; but the object that fixes their contemplation, is their experience; and they are feeding their ſouls, and feaſting a ſelfiſh principle with a view of their diſcoveries: they take more comfort in their diſcoveries than in Chriſt diſcovered, which is the true notion of living upon experiences and frames; and not a uſing experiences as the ſigns, on which they rely for evidence of their good eſtate, which ſome call living on experiences; though it be very obſervable, that ſome of them who do ſo, are moſt notorious for living upon experiences, according to the true notion of it.

The affections of hypocrites are very often after this manner; they are firſt much affected with ſome impreſſion on their imagination, or ſome impulſe, which they take to be an immediate ſuggeſtion, or teſtimony from God, of his love and their happineſs, and high privilege in ſome reſpect, either with or without a text of ſcripture; they are mightily taken with this,

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as a great diſcovery: and hence ariſe high affections. And when their affections are raiſed, then they view thoſe high affections, and call them great and wonderful experiences; and they have a notion that God is greatly pleaſed with thoſe affections; and this affects them more; and ſo they are affected with their affections. And thus their affections riſe higher and higher, until they ſometimes are perfectly ſwallowed up: and ſelf-conceit, and a fierce zeal riſes withal; and all is built like a caſtle in the air, on no other foundation but imagination, ſelf-love, and pride.

And as the thoughts of this ſort of perſons are, ſo is their talk; for out of the abundance of their heart, their mouth ſpeaketh. As in their high affections, they keep their eye upon the beauty of their experiences, and greatneſs of their attainments; ſo they are great talkers about themſelves. The true ſaint, when under great ſpiritual affections, from the fulneſs of his heart, is ready to be ſpeaking much of God, and his glorious perfections and works, and of the beauty and amiableneſs of Chriſt, and the glorious things of the goſpel; but hypocrites, in their high affections, talk more of the diſcovery, than they do of the thing diſcovered; they are full of talk about the great things they have met with, the wonderful diſcoveries they have had, how ſure they are of the love of God to them, how ſafe their condition is, and how they know they ſhall go to heaven, &c.

A true ſaint, when in the enjoyment of true diſcoveries of the ſweet glory of God and Chriſt, has his mind too much captivated and engaged by what he views without himſelf, to ſtand at that time to view himſelf, and his own attainments: it would be a diverſion and loſs which he could not bear, to take his eye off from the raviſhing object of his contemplation, to ſurvey his own experience, and to ſpend time in thinking with himſelf, what an high attainment this is, and what a good ſtory I now have to tell others. Nor does the pleaſure and ſweetneſs of his mind at that time, chiefly ariſe from the conſideration of the ſafety of his ſtate, or any thing he has in view of his own qualifications, experiences, or circumſtances: but from the divine and ſupreme beauty of what is the object of his direct view, without himſelf; which ſweetly entertains, and ſtrongly holds his mind.

As the love and joy of hypocrites, are all from the ſource of ſelf-love; ſo it is with their other affections, their ſorrow for

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ſin, their humiliation and ſubmiſſion, their religious deſires and zeal: every thing is as it were paid for before-hand, in God's highly gratifying their ſelf-love, and their luſts, by making ſo much of them, and exalting them ſo highly, as things are in their imagination. It is eaſy for nature, as corrupt as it is, under a notion of being already ſome of the higheſt favourites of heaven, and having a God who does ſo protect them and favour them in their ſins, to love this imaginary God that ſuits them ſo well, and to extol him, and ſubmit to him, and to be fierce and zealous for him. The high affections of many are all built on the ſuppoſition of their being eminent ſaints. If that opinion which they have of themſelves were taken away, if they thought they were ſome of the lower form of ſaints, (though they ſhould yet ſuppoſe themſelves to be real ſaints) their high affections would fall to the ground. If they only ſaw a little of the ſinfulneſs and vileneſs of their own hearts, and their deformity, in the midſt of their beſt duties and their beſt affections, it would knock their affections on the head; becauſe their affections are built upon ſelf, therefore ſelf-knowlege would deſtroy them. But as to truly gracious affections, they are built elſewhere; they have their foundation out of ſelf, in God and Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore a diſcovery of themſelves, of their own deformity, and the meanneſs of their experiences, though it will purify their affections, yet it will not deſtroy them, but in ſome reſpects ſweeten and heighten them.

III. Thoſe affections that are truly holy, are primarily founded on the lovelineſs of the moral excellency of divine things. Or, (to expreſs it otherwiſe) a love to divine things for the beauty and ſweetneſs of their moral excellency, is the firſt beginning and ſpring of all holy affections.

Here, for the ſake of the more illiterate reader, I will explain what I mean by the moral excellency of divine things.

And it may be obſerved, that the word *moral* is not to be underſtood here, according to the common and vulgar acceptation of the word, when men ſpeak of *morality*, and a *moral* behaviour; meaning an outward conformity to the duties of the moral law, and eſpecially the duties of the ſecond table; or intending no more at fartheſt, than ſuch ſeeming virtues, as proceed from natural principles, in oppoſition to thoſe virtues that are more inward, ſpiritual, and divine; as the honeſty, juſtice, generoſity, good-nature, and public ſpirit of many of

the heathen, are called *moral* virtues, in diſtinction from the holy faith, love, humility, and heavenly-mindedneſs of true Chriſtians: I ſay, the word *moral* is not to be underſtood thus in this place.

But in order to a right underſtanding what is meant, it muſt be obſerved, that divines commonly make a diſtinction between *moral* good and evil, and *natural* good and evil. By *moral* evil, they mean the evil of ſin, or that evil which is againſt duty, and contrary to what is right and ought to be. By *natural* evil, they do not mean that evil which is properly oppoſed to duty; but that which is contrary to mere nature, without any reſpect to a rule of duty. So the evil of ſuffering is called natural evil, ſuch as pain and torment, diſgrace, and the like: theſe things are contrary to mere nature, contrary to the nature of both bad and good, hateful to wicked men and devils, as well as good men and angels. So likewiſe natural defects are called natural evils, as if a child be monſtrous, or a natural fool: theſe are natural evils, but are not moral evils, becauſe they have not properly the nature of the evil of ſin. On the other hand, as by moral evil, divines mean the evil of ſin, or that which is contrary to what is right; ſo by *moral* good, they mean that which is contrary to ſin, or that good in beings who have will and choice, whereby, as voluntary agents, they are, and act, as it becomes them to be and to act, or ſo as is moſt fit, and ſuitable, and lovely. By *natural* good, they mean that good that is entirely of a different kind from holineſs or virtue, *viz.* that which perfects or ſuits nature, conſidering nature abſtractly from any holy or unholy qualifications, and without any relation to any rule or meaſure of right and wrong.

Thus pleaſure is a natural good; ſo is honor; ſo is ſtrength; ſo is ſpeculative knowledge, human learning, and policy. Thus there is a diſtinction to be made between the natural good that men are poſſeſſed of, and their moral good; and alſo between the natural and moral good of the angels in heaven: the great capacity of their underſtandings, and their great ſtrength, and the honorable circumſtances they are in as the great miniſters of God's kingdom, whence they are called thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, is the natural good which they are poſſeſſed of; but their perfect and glorious holineſs and goodneſs, their pure and flaming love to God, and to the ſaints, and one another, is their moral good. So

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divines make a diſtinction between the natural and moral perfections of God: by the *moral* perfections of God, they mean thoſe attributes which God exerciſes as a moral agent, or whereby the heart and will of God are good, right, and infinitely becoming, and lovely; ſuch as his righteouſneſs, truth, faithfulneſs, and goodneſs; or, in one word, his holineſs. By God's *natural* attributes or perfections they mean thoſe attributes, wherein, according to our way of conceiving of God, conſiſts, not the holineſs or moral goodneſs of God, but his greatneſs; ſuch as his power, his knowlege whereby he knows all things, and his being eternal, from everlaſting to everlaſting, his omnipreſence, and his awful and terrible majeſty.

The moral excellency of an intelligent voluntary being, is more immediately ſeated in the heart or will of moral agents. That intelligent being whoſe will is truly right and lovely, he is morally good or excellent.

This moral excellency of an intelligent being, when it is true and real, and not only external, or merely ſeeming and counterfeit, is *holineſs*. Therefore *holineſs* comprehends all the true moral excellency of intelligent beings: there is no other *true virtue*, but *real holineſs*. Holineſs comprehends all the true virtue of a good man, his love to God, his gracious love to men, his juſtice, his charity, and bowels of mercies, his gracious meekneſs and gentleneſs, and all other true Chriſtian virtues that he has, belong to his holineſs. So the holineſs of God in the more extenſive ſenſe of the word, and the ſenſe in which the word is commonly, if not univerſally uſed concerning God in ſcripture, is the ſame with the moral excellency of the divine nature, or his purity and beauty as a moral agent, comprehending all his moral perfections, his righteouſneſs, faithfulneſs, and goodneſs. As in holy men, their charity, Chriſtian kindneſs and mercy, belongs to their holineſs; ſo the kindneſs and mercy of God, belongs to his holineſs. Holineſs in man, is but the image of God's holineſs: there are not more virtues belonging to the image, than are in the original: derived holineſs has not more in it, than is in that underived holineſs, which is its fountain: there is no more than grace for grace, or grace in the image, anſwerable to grace in the original.

As there are two kinds of attributes in God, according to our way of conceiving of him, his moral attributes, which are ſummed up in his *holineſs*, and his natural attributes, of ſtrength, knowlege,

knowlege, &c. that conſtitute the *greatneſs* of God; ſo there is a twofold image of God in man, his *moral* or *ſpiritual* image, which is his holineſs, that is the image of God's moral excellency; (which image was loſt by the fall;) and God's *natural* image, conſiſting in man's reaſon and underſtanding, his natural ability, and dominion over the creatures, which is the image of God's natural attributes.

From what has been ſaid, it may eaſily be underſtood what I intend, when I ſay that a love to divine things for the beauty of their *moral excellency*, is the beginning and ſpring of all holy affections. It has been already ſhown, under the former head, that the firſt objective ground of all holy affections is the ſupreme excellency of divine things as they are in themſelves, or in their own nature; I now proceed further, and ſay more particularly, that that kind of excellency of the nature of divine things, which is the firſt objective ground of all holy affections, is their moral excellency, or their holineſs. *Holy perſons*, in the exerciſe of *holy affections*, do love divine things primarily for their *holineſs*: they love God, in the firſt place, for the beauty of his holineſs or moral perfection, as being ſupremely amiable in itſelf. Not that the ſaints, in the exerciſe of gracious affections, do love God only for his holineſs; all his attributes are amiable and glorious in their eyes; they delight in every divine perfection; the contemplation of the infinite greatneſs, power, and knowlege, and terrible majeſty of God, is pleaſant to them. But their love to God for his holineſs is what is moſt fundamental and eſſential in their love. Here it is that true love to God begins; all other holy love to divine things flows from hence: this is the moſt eſſential and diſtinguiſhing thing that belongs to a holy love to God, with regard to the foundation of it. A love to God for the beauty of his moral attributes, leads to, and neceſſarily cauſes a delight in God for all his attributes; for his moral attributes cannot be without his natural attributes: for infinite holineſs ſuppoſes infinite wiſdom, and an infinite capacity and greatneſs; and all the attributes of God do as it were imply one another.

The true beauty and lovelineſs of all intelligent beings does primarily and moſt eſſentially conſiſt in their moral excellency or holineſs. Herein conſiſts the lovelineſs of the angels, without which, with all their natural perfections, their ſtrength, and their knowlege, they would have no more lovelineſs than devils. It is moral excellency alone, that is in itſelf, and on

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its own account, the excellency of intelligent beings: it is this that gives beauty to, or rather is the beauty of their natural perfections and qualifications. Moral excellency is the excellency of natural excellencies. Natural qualifications are either excellent or otherwiſe, according as they are joined with moral excellency or not. Strength and knowlege does not render any being lovely, without holineſs, but more hateful; though they render them more lovely, when joined with holineſs. Thus the elect angels are the more glorious for their ſtrength and knowlege, becauſe theſe natural perfections of theirs are ſanctified by their moral perfection. But though the devils are very ſtrong, and of great natural underſtanding, they be not the more lovely: they are more terrible indeed, but not the more amiable; but on the contrary, the more hateful. The holineſs of an intelligent creature, is the beauty of all his natural perfections. And ſo it is in God, according to our way of conceiving of the divine Being: holineſs is in a peculiar manner the beauty of the divine nature. Hence we often read of the *beauty of holineſs*, Pſal. xxix. 2. Pſal. xcvi. 9. and cx. 3. This renders all his other attributes glorious and lovely. It is the glory of God's wiſdom, that it is a holy wiſdom, and not a wicked ſubtilty and craftineſs. This makes his majeſty lovely, and not merely dreadful and horrible, that it is a holy majeſty. It is the glory of God's immutability, that it is a holy immutability, and not an inflexible obſtinacy in wickedneſs.

And therefore it muſt needs be, that a ſight of God's lovelineſs muſt begin here. A true love to God muſt begin with a delight in his holineſs, and not with a delight in any other attribute; for no other attribute is truly lovely without this, and no otherwiſe than as (according to our way of conceiving of God) it derives its lovelineſs from this; and therefore it is impoſſible that other attributes ſhould appear lovely, in their true lovelineſs, until this is ſeen; and it is impoſſible that any perfection of the divine nature ſhould be loved with true love until this is loved. If the true lovelineſs of all God's perfections, ariſes from the lovelineſs of his holineſs; then the true love of all his perfections, ariſes from the love of his holineſs. They that do not ſee the glory of God's holineſs, cannot ſee any thing of the true glory of his mercy and grace: they ſee nothing of the glory of thoſe attributes, as any excellency of God's nature, as it is in itſelf; though they may be affected with them, and love them, as they concern their intereſt: for theſe attributes are no part of the excellency of God's nature,

as

as that is excellent in itſelf, any otherwiſe than as they are included in his holineſs, more largely taken; or as they are a part of his moral perfection.

As the beauty of the divine nature does primarily conſiſt in God's holineſs, ſo does the beauty of all divine things. Herein conſiſts the beauty of the ſaints, that they are ſaints, or holy ones: it is the moral image of God in them, which is their beauty; and that is their holineſs. Herein conſiſts the beauty and brightneſs of the angels of heaven, that they are holy angels, and ſo not devils; Dan. iv. 13, 17, 23. Matth. xxv. 31. Mark viii. 38. Acts x. 22. Rev. xiv. 10. Herein conſiſts the beauty of the Chriſtian religion, above all other religions, that it is ſo holy a religion. Herein conſiſts the excellency of the word of God, that it is ſo holy; Pſal. cxix. 140. "Thy word "is very pure, therefore thy ſervant loveth it." verſ. 128. "I "eſteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; "and I hate every falſe way." verſ. 138. "Thy teſtimonies "that thou haſt commanded, are righteous, and very faithful." And 172. "My tongue ſhall ſpeak of thy word; for all thy "commandments are righteouſneſs." And Pſal. xix. 7.—10. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul: the teſ-"timony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple. The "ſtatutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the com-"mandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The "fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments "of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether: more to be "deſired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; ſweeter "alſo than honey, and the honey-comb." Herein does primarily conſiſt the amiableneſs and beauty of the Lord Jeſus, whereby he is the chief among ten thouſands, and altogether lovely; even in that he is *the holy One of God*, Acts iii. 14. and *God's holy child*, Acts iv. 27. and *he that is holy, and he that is true*, Rev. iii. 7. All the ſpiritual beauty of his human nature, conſiſting in his meekneſs, lowlineſs, patience, heavenleſs, love to God, love to men, condeſcenſion to the mean and vile, and compaſſion to the miſerable, *&c.* all is ſummed up in his holineſs. And the beauty of his divine nature, of which the beauty of his human nature is the image and reflection, does alſo primarily conſiſt in his holineſs. Herein primarily conſiſts the glory of the goſpel, that it is a holy goſpel, and ſo bright an emanation of the holy beauty of God and Jeſus Chriſt: herein conſiſts the ſpiritual beauty of its doctrines, that they are holy doctrines, or doctrines according to godlineſs. And herein does conſiſt the ſpiritual beauty of the way of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt,

Chriſt, that it is ſo holy a way. And herein chiefly conſiſts the glory of heaven, that it is the *holy city*, the *holy Jeruſalem*, *the habitation of God's holineſs*, and ſo *of his glory*, Iſ. lxiii. 15. All the beauties of the new Jeruſalem, as it is deſcribed in the two laſt chapters of Revelation, are but various repreſentations of this: ſee chap. xxi. 2, 10, 11, 18, 21, 27. chap. xxii. 1, 3.

And therefore it is primarily on account of this kind of excellency, that the ſaints do love all theſe things. Thus they love the word of God, *becauſe it is very pure*. It is on this account they love the ſaints; and on this account chiefly it is, that heaven is lovely to them, and thoſe holy tabernacles of God amiable in their eyes: it is on this account that they love God; and on this account primarily it is, that they love Chriſt, and that their hearts delight in the doctrines of the goſpel, and ſweetly acquieſce in the way of ſalvation therein revealed.*

Under the head of the firſt diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of gracious affection, I obſerved, that there is given to thoſe that are regenerated, a new ſupernatural ſenſe, that is as it were a certain divine ſpiritual taſte, which is in its whole nature diverſe from any former kinds of ſenſation of the mind, as taſting is diverſe from any of the other five ſenſes, and that ſomething is perceived by a true ſaint in the exerciſe of this new ſenſe of mind, in ſpiritual and divine things, as entirely different from any thing that is perceived in them by natural men, as the ſweet taſte of honey is diverſe from the ideas men get of honey by looking on it or feeling of it: now this that I have been ſpeaking, *viz.* the beauty of holineſs, is that thing in ſpiritual and divine things, which is perceived by this ſpiritual ſenſe, that is ſo diverſe from all that natural men perceive in them;

* "To the right cloſing with Chriſt's perſon, this is alſo required, to taſte the bitterneſs of ſin, as the greateſt evil: elſe a man will never cloſe with Chriſt, for his holineſs in him, and from him, as the greateſt good. For we told you, that that is the right cloſing with Chriſt for himſelf, when it is for his holineſs. For aſk, a whoriſh heart, what beauty he ſees in the perſon of Chriſt; he will, after he has looked over his kingdom, his righteouſneſs, all his works, ſee a beauty in them, becauſe they do ſerve his turn, to comfort him only. Aſk a virgin, he will ſee his happineſs in all; but that which makes the Lord amiable is his holineſs, which is in him to make him holy too. As in marriage, it is the perſonal beauty draws the heart. And hence I have thought it reaſon, that he that loves the brethren for a little grace, will love Chriſt much more." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 84.

them ; this kind of beauty is the quality that is the immediate object of this ſpiritual ſenſe ; this is the ſweetneſs that is the proper object of this ſpiritual taſte. The ſcripture often repreſents the beauty and ſweetneſs of holineſs as the grand object of a ſpiritual taſte and ſpiritual appetite. This was the ſweet food of the holy ſoul of Jeſus Chriſt, John iv. 32, 34. " I have " meat to eat, that ye know not of.—My meat is to do the will " of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his work." I know of no part of the holy ſcriptures, where the nature and evidences of true and ſincere godlineſs, are ſo much of ſet purpoſe, and ſo fully and largely inſiſted on and delineated, as the 119th Pſalm ; the pſalmiſt declares his deſign in the firſt verſes of the pſalm, and he keeps his eye on this deſign all along, and purſues it to the end : but in this pſalm the excellency of holineſs is repreſented as the immediate object of a ſpiritual taſte, reliſh, appetite and delight, *God's law*, that grand expreſſion and emanation of the holineſs of God's nature, and preſcription of holineſs to the creature, is all along repreſented as the food and entertainment, and as the great object of the love, the appetite, the complacence and rejoicing of the gracious nature, which prizes God's commandments *above gold, yea, the fineſt gold*, and to which they are *ſweeter than the honey, and honey-comb* ; and that upon account of their holineſs, as I obſerved before. The ſame pſalmiſt declares, that this is the ſweetneſs that a ſpiritual taſte reliſhes in God's law, Pſal. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10. " The law of the " Lord is perfect :—the commandment of the Lord is pure ; " the fear of the Lord is clean ; the ſtatutes of the Lord are " right, rejoicing the heart :—the judgments of the Lord are " true, and righteous altogether : more to be deſired are they " than gold, yea, than much fine gold ; ſweeter alſo than honey " and the honey-comb."

A holy love has a holy object : the holineſs of love conſiſts eſpecially in this, that it is the love of that which is holy, as holy, or for its holineſs ; ſo that it is the holineſs of the object, which is the quality whereon it fixes and terminates. An holy nature muſt needs love that in holy things chiefly, which is moſt agreeable to itſelf ; but ſurely that in divine things, which above all others is agreeable to holy nature, is holineſs, becauſe holineſs muſt be above all other things agreeable to holineſs ; for nothing can be more agreeable to any nature than itſelf ; holy nature muſt be above all things agreeable to holy nature : and ſo the holy nature of God and Chriſt, and the word of God, and other divine things, muſt be above all other things agreeable to the holy nature that is in the ſaints.

And

And again, an holy nature doubtleſs loves holy things, eſpecially on the account of that for which ſinful nature has enmity againſt them: but that for which chiefly ſinful nature is at enmity againſt holy things, is their holineſs; it is for this, that the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, and againſt the law of God, and the people of God. Now it is juſt arguing from contraries; from contrary cauſes, to contrary effects; from oppoſite natures, to oppoſite tendencies. We know that holineſs is of a directly contrary nature to wickedneſs: as therefore it is the nature of wickedneſs chiefly to oppoſe and hate holineſs; ſo it muſt be the nature of holineſs chiefly to tend to, and delight in holineſs.

The holy nature in the ſaints and angels in heaven (where the true tendency of it beſt appears) is principally engaged by the holineſs of divine things. This is the divine beauty which chiefly engages the attention, admiration and praiſe of the bright and burning Seraphim; Iſ. vi. 3. "One cried unto ano-
"ther, and ſaid, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hoſts, the whole
"earth is full of his glory." And Rev. iv. 8. "They reſt not
"day and night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,
which was, and is, and is to come." So the glorified ſaints, chap. xv. 4. "Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?
"for thou only art holy."

And the ſcriptures repreſent the ſaints on earth as adoring God primarily on this account, and admiring and extolling all God's attributes, either as deriving lovelineſs from his holineſs, or as being a part of it. Thus when they praiſe God for his power, his holineſs is the beauty that engages them; Pſal. xcviii. 1. "O ſing unto the Lord a new ſong, for he hath done marvel-
"lous things: his right hand, and his HOLY arm hath gotten
"him the victory." So when they praiſe him for his juſtice and terrible majeſty; Pſal. xcix. 2, 3. "The Lord is great in
"Zion, and he is high above all people. Let them praiſe thy
"great and terrible name: for it is HOLY." verſ. 5. "Exalt ye
"the Lord our God, and worſhip at his footſtool: for he is
"HOLY." verſ. 8, 9. "Thou waſt a God that forgaveſt them,
"though thou tookeſt vengeance of their inventions. Exalt
"ye the Lord our God, and worſhip at his holy hill: for
"the Lord our God is HOLY." So when they praiſe God for his mercy and faithfulneſs; Pſal. xcvii. 11, 12. "Light
"is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in
"heart. Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous: and give thanks
"at the remembrance of his HOLINESS." 1 Sam. ii. 2. "There

" is none HOLY as the Lord : for there is none beſide thee :
" neither is there any rock like our God."

By this therefore all may try their affections, and particularly their love and joy. Various kinds of creatures ſhew the difference of their natures, very much, in the different things they reliſh as their proper good, one delighting in that which another abhors. Such a difference is there between true ſaints, and natural men : natural men have no ſenſe of the goodneſs and excellency of holy things, at leaſt for their holineſs ; they have no taſte of that kind of good ; and ſo may be ſaid not to know that divine good, or not to ſee it ; it is wholly hid from them : but the ſaints, by the mighty power of God, have it diſcovered to them ; they have that ſupernatural, moſt noble and divine ſenſe given them, by which they perceive it ; and it is this that captivates their hearts, and delights them above all things ; it is the moſt amiable and ſweet thing to the heart of a true ſaint, that is to be found in heaven or earth ; that which above all others attracts and engages his ſoul ; and that wherein, above all things, he places his happineſs, and which he lots upon for ſolace and entertainment to his mind, in this world, and full ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs in another. By this you may examine your love to God, and to Jeſus Chriſt, and to the word of God, and your joy in them, and alſo your love to the people of God, and your deſires after heaven ; whether they be from a ſupreme delight in this ſort of beauty, without being primarily moved from your imagined intereſt in them, or expectations from them. There are many high affections, great ſeeming love and rapturous joys, which have nothing of this holy reliſh belonging to them.

Particularly, by what has been ſaid you may try your diſcoveries of the glory of God's grace and love, and your affections ariſing from them. The grace of God may appear lovely two ways ; either as *bonum utile*, a profitable good to me, that which greatly ſerves my intereſt, and ſo ſuits my ſelf-love ; or as *bonum formoſum*, a beautiful good in itſelf, and part of the moral and ſpiritual excellency of the divine nature. In this latter reſpect it is that the true ſaints have their hearts affected, and love captivated by the free grace of God in the firſt place.

From the things that have been ſaid, it appears, that if perſons have a great ſenſe of the *natural* perfections of God, and are greatly affected with them, or have any other ſight or ſenſe of God than that which conſiſts in, or implies a ſenſe of the

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beauty of his *moral* perfections, it is no certain ſign of grace: as particularly, mens having a great ſenſe of the *awful greatneſs, and terrible majeſty of God*; for this is only God's natural perfection, and what men may ſee, and yet be entirely blind to the beauty of his moral perfection, and have nothing of that ſpiritual taſte which reliſhes this divine ſweetneſs.

It has been ſhown already, in what was ſaid upon the firſt diſtinguiſhing mark of gracious affections, that that which is ſpiritual, is entirely different in its nature, from all that it is poſſible any graceleſs perſon ſhould be the ſubject of, while he continues graceleſs. But it is poſſible that thoſe who are wholly without grace, ſhould have a clear ſight, and very great and affecting ſenſe of God's greatneſs, his mighty power, and awful majeſty; for this is what the devils have, though they have loſt the ſpiritual knowlege of God, conſiſting in a ſenſe of the amiableneſs of his moral perfections; they are perfectly deſtitute of any ſenſe or reliſh of that kind of beauty, yet they have a very great knowlege of the natural glory of God, (if I may ſo ſpeak,) or his awful greatneſs and majeſty; this they behold, and are affected with the apprehenſions of, and therefore tremble before him. This glory of God all ſhall behold at the day of judgment; God will make all rational beings to behold it to a great degree indeed, angels and devils, ſaints and ſinners: Chriſt will manifeſt his infinite greatneſs, and awful majeſty to every one, in a moſt open, clear and convincing manner, and in a light that none can reſiſt, when *he ſhall come in the glory of his Father, and every eye ſhall ſee him*; when they ſhall cry to the mountains to fall upon them, to hide them from the face of him that ſits upon the throne, they are repreſented as ſeeing the glory of God's majeſty, Iſ. ii. 10, 19, 21. God will make all his enemies to behold this, and to live in a moſt clear and affecting view of it, in hell, to all eternity. God hath often declared his immutable purpoſe to make all his enemies to know him in this reſpect, in ſo often annexing theſe words to the threatenings he denounces againſt them, *And they ſhall know that I am the Lord*; yea, he hath ſworn that all men ſhall ſee his glory in this reſpect, Numb. xiv. 21. "As truly as "I live, all the earth ſhall be filled with the glory of the Lord." And this kind of manifeſtation of God is very often ſpoken of in ſcripture, as made, or to be made, in the ſight of God's enemies in this world; Exod. ix. 16. and chap. xiv. 18. and xv. 16. Pſal. lxvi. 3. and xlvi. 10. and other places innumerable.

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This was a manifeſtation which God made of himſelf in the ſight of that wicked congregation at mount Sinai; deeply affecting them with it; ſo that all the people in the camp trembled. Wicked men and devils will ſee, and have a great ſenſe of every thing that appertains to the glory of God, but only the beauty of his moral perfection. They will ſee his infinite greatneſs and majeſty, his infinite power, and will be fully convinced of his omniſcience, and his eternity and immutability; and they will ſee and know every thing appertaining to his moral attributes themſelves, but only the beauty and amiableneſs of them: they will ſee and know that he is perfectly juſt and righteous, and true; and that he is a holy God, of purer eyes than to behold evil, who cannot look on iniquity; and they will ſee the wonderful manifeſtations of his infinite goodneſs and free grace to the ſaints; and there is nothing will be hid from their eyes, but only the *beauty* of theſe moral attributes, and that beauty of the other attributes, which ariſes from it. And ſo natural men in this world are capable of having a very affecting ſenſe of every thing elſe that appertains to God, but this only. Nebuchadnezzar had a great and very affecting ſenſe of the infinite greatneſs and awful majeſty of God, of his ſupreme and abſolute dominion, and mighty and irreſiſtible power, and of his ſovereignty, and that he, and all the inhabitants of the earth, were nothing before him; and alſo had a great conviction in his conſcience of his juſtice, and an affecting ſenſe of his great goodneſs, Dan. iv. 1, 2, 3, 34, 35, 37. And the ſenſe that Darius had of God's perfections, ſeems to be very much like his, Dan. vi. 25, *&c.* But the ſaints and angels do behold the glory of God conſiſting in the *beauty of his holineſs*: and it is this ſight only, that will melt and humble the hearts of men, and wean them from the world, and draw them to God, and effectually change them. A ſight of the awful greatneſs of God, may overpower mens ſtrength, and be more than they can endure; but if the moral beauty of God be hid, the enmity of the heart will remain in its full ſtrength, no love will be inkindled, all will not be effectual to gain the will, but that will remain inflexible; whereas the firſt glimpſe of the moral and ſpiritual glory of God ſhining into the heart, produces all theſe effects as it were with omnipotent power, which nothing can withſtand.

The ſenſe that natural men may have of the awful greatneſs of God may affect them various ways; it may not only terrify them,

them, but it may elevate them, and raiſe their joy and praiſe, as their circumſtances may be. This will be the natural effect of it, under the real or ſuppoſed receipt of ſome extraordinary mercy from God, by the influence of mere principles of nature. It has been ſhown already, that the receipt of kindneſs may, by the influence of natural principles, affect the heart with gratitude and praiſe to God; but if a perſon, at the ſame time that he receives remarkable kindneſs from God, has a ſenſe of his infinite greatneſs, and that he is but nothing in compariſon of him, ſurely this will naturally raiſe his gratitude and praiſe the higher, for kindneſs to one ſo much inferior. A ſenſe of God's greatneſs had this effect upon Nebuchadnezzar, under the receipt of that extraordinary favor of his reſtoration, after he had been driven from men, and had his dwelling with the beaſts: a ſenſe of God's exceeding greatneſs raiſes his gratitude very high; ſo that he does, in the moſt lofty terms, extol and magnify God, and calls upon all the world to do it with him: and much more, if a natural man, at the ſame time that he is greatly affected with God's infinite greatneſs and majeſty, entertains a ſtrong conceit that this great God has made him his child and ſpecial favourite, and promiſed him eternal glory in his higheſt love, will this have a tendency according to the courſe of nature, to raiſe his joy and praiſe to a great height.

Therefore, it is beyond doubt, that too much weight has been laid, by many perſons of late, on diſcoveries of God's greatneſs, awful majeſty, and natural perfection, operating after this manner, without any real view of the holy, lovely majeſty of God. And experience does abundantly witneſs to what reaſon and ſcripture declare as to this matter; there having been very many perſons, who have ſeemed to be overpowered with the greatneſs and awful majeſty of God, and conſequentially elevated in the manner that has been ſpoken of, who have been very far from having appearances of a Chriſtian ſpirit and temper, in any manner of proportion, or fruits in practice in any wiſe agreeable; but their diſcoveries have worked in a way contrary to the operation of truly ſpiritual diſcoveries.

Not that a ſenſe of God's greatneſs and natural attributes is not exceeding uſeful and neceſſary. For, as I obſerved before, this is implied in a manifeſtation of the beauty of God's holineſs. Though that be ſomething beyond it, it ſuppoſes it, as the greater ſuppoſes the leſs. And though natural men may have a ſenſe of the natural perfections of God; yet undoubted-

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ly this is more frequent and common with the ſaints, than with natural men; and grace tends to enable men to ſee theſe things in a better manner, than natural men do; and not only enables them to ſee God's natural attributes, but that beauty of thoſe attributes, which (according to our way of conceiving of God) is derived from his holineſs.

IV. Gracious affections do ariſe from the mind's being enlightened, rightly and ſpiritually to underſtand or apprehend divine things.

Holy affections are not heat without light; but evermore ariſe from ſome information of the underſtanding, ſome ſpiritual inſtruction that the mind receives, ſome light or actual knowlege. The child of God is graciouſly affected, becauſe he ſees and underſtands ſomething more of divine things than he did before, more of God or Chriſt, and of the glorious things exhibited in the goſpel; he has ſome clearer and better view than he had before, when he was not affected: either he receives ſome underſtanding of divine things that is new to him; or has his former knowlege renewed after the view was decayed; 1 John iv. 7. "Every one that loveth, knoweth God." Phil. i. 9. "I pray that your love may abound more and more "in knowlege, and in all judgment." Rom. x. 2. "They have "a zeal of God, but not according to knowlege." Col. iii. 10. "The new man, which is renewed in knowlege." Pſal. xliii. 3, 4. "O ſend out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, "let them bring me unto thy holy hill." John vi. 45. "It "is written in the prophets, And they ſhall be all taught of "God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of "the Father, cometh unto me." Knowlege is the key that firſt opens the hard heart and enlarges the affections, and ſo opens the way for men into the kingdom of heaven: Luke xi. 52. "Ye have taken away the key of knowlege."

Now there are many affections which do not ariſe from any light in the underſtanding. And when it is thus, it is a ſure evidence that theſe affections are not ſpiritual, let them be ever ſo high. * Indeed they have ſome new apprehenſions which they

* "Many that have had mighty ſtrong affections at firſt converſion, afterwards become dry, and wither, and conſume, and pine, and die away: and now their hypocriſy is manifeſt; if not to all the world by

hey had not before. Such is the nature of man, that it is mpoſſible his mind ſhould be affected, unleſs it be by ſome- hing that he apprehends, or that his mind conceives of. But n many perſons thoſe apprehenſions or conceptions that they ave, wherewith they are affected, have nothing of the nature of knowlege or inſtruction in them. As for inſtance; when perſon is affected with a lively idea, ſuddenly excited in his nind, of ſome ſhape, or very beautiful pleaſant form of coun- enance, or ſome ſhining light, or other glorious outward ppearance: here is ſomething apprehended or conceived by he mind; but there is nothing of the nature of inſtruction in ; perſons become never the wiſer by ſuch things, or more nowing about God, or a Mediator between God and man, r the way of ſalvation by Chriſt, or any thing contained in ny of the doctrines of the goſpel. Perſons by theſe external leas have no further acquaintance with God, as to any of the tributes or perfections of his nature; nor have they any fur- er underſtanding of his word, or any of his ways or works. ruly ſpiritual and gracious affections are not raiſed after this anner; theſe ariſe from the enlightening of the underſtand- g to underſtand the things that are taught of God and Chriſt,

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open profaneneſs, yet to the diſcerning eye of living Chriſtians, a formal, barren, unſavoury, unfruitful heart and courſe; becauſe ey never had light to conviction enough as yet.—It is ſtrange to ſome people carried with mighty affection againſt ſin and hell, and er Chriſt. And what is the hell you fear? A dreadful place. hat is Chriſt? They ſcarce know ſo much as devils do; but that ll. Oh truſt them not! Many *have*, and theſe *will* fall away to ne luſt, or opinion, or pride, or world; and the reaſon is, they er had light enough, John v. 35. "John was a burning and ſhi- ning light, and they did joy in him for a ſeaſon;" yet glorious it was, they ſaw not Chriſt by it, eſpecially not with divine light. s rare to ſee Chriſtians full both of light and affection. And there- e conſider of this; many a man has been well brought up, and is a ſweet loving nature, mild and gentle, and harmleſs, likes and es the beſt things, and his meaning, and mind, and heart is good, has more in heart than in ſhew; and ſo hopes all ſhall go well h him. I ſay, there may lie greateſt hypocriſy under greateſt af- ions; eſpecially if they want light. You ſhall be hardened in r hypocriſy by them. I never liked violent affections and pangs, only ſuch as were dropped in by light; becauſe thoſe come from external principle, and laſt not, but theſe do. Men are not af- hted by the light of the ſun, though clearer than the lightning." *bard's Parable*, Part I. p. 146.

in a new manner, the coming to a new underſtanding of the excellent nature of God, and his wonderful perfections, ſome new view of Chriſt in his ſpiritual excellencies and fulneſs, or things opened to him in a new manner, that appertain to the way of ſalvation by Chriſt, whereby he now ſees how it is, and underſtands thoſe divine and ſpiritual doctrines which once were fooliſhneſs to him. Such enlightenings of the underſtanding as theſe, are things entirely different in their nature, from ſtrong ideas of ſhapes and colours, and outward brightneſs and glory, or ſounds and voices. That all gracious affections do ariſe from ſome inſtruction or enlightening of the underſtanding, is therefore a further proof, that affections which ariſe from ſuch impreſſion on the imagination, are not gracious affections, beſides the things obſerved before, which make this evident.

Hence alſo it appears, that affections ariſing from texts of ſcripture coming to the mind are vain, when no inſtruction received in the underſtanding from thoſe texts, or any thing taught in thoſe texts, is the ground of the affection, but the manner of their coming to the mind. When Chriſt makes the ſcripture a means of the heart's burning with gracious affection, it is *by opening the ſcriptures to their underſtandings* Luke xxiv. 32. "Did not our heart burn within us, while he "talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the ſcrip"tures?" It appears alſo that the affection which is occaſioned by the coming of a text of ſcripture muſt be vain, when the affection is founded on ſomething that is ſuppoſed to be taught by it, which really is not contained in it, nor in any other ſcripture; becauſe ſuch ſuppoſed inſtruction is not real inſtruction, but a miſtake, and miſapprehenſion of the mind. As for inſtance, when perſons ſuppoſe that they are expreſly taught by ſome ſcripture coming to their minds, that they in particular are beloved of God, or that their ſins are forgiven, that God is their father, and the like; this is a miſtake or miſapprehenſion; for the ſcripture no where reveals the individual perſons who are beloved, expreſly; but only by conſequence, by revealing the qualifications of perſons that are beloved of God: and therefore this matter is not to be learned from ſcripture any other way than by conſequence, and from theſe qualifications; for things are not to be *learned from* the ſcripture any other way than they are *taught in* the ſcripture.

Affections

Affections really ariſe from ignorance, rather than inſtruction, in theſe inſtances which have been mentioned; as likewiſe in ſome others that might be mentioned. As ſome, when they find themſelves free of ſpeech in prayer, they call it God's being with them; and this affects them more; and ſo their affections are ſet a-going and increaſed; when they look not into the cauſe of this freedom of ſpeech, which may ariſe many other ways beſides God's ſpiritual preſence. So ſome are much affected with ſome apt thoughts that come into their minds about the ſcripture, and call it the Spirit of God teaching them. So they aſcribe many of the workings of their own minds, which they have a high opinion of, and are pleaſed and taken with, to the ſpecial immediate influences of God's Spirit; and ſo are mightily affected with their privilege. And there are ſome inſtances of perſons, in whom it ſeems manifeſt, that the firſt ground of their affection is ſome bodily ſenſation. The animal ſpirits, by ſome cauſe, (and probably ſometimes by the devil) are ſuddenly and unaccountably put into a very agreeable motion, cauſing perſons to feel pleaſantly in their bodies; the animal ſpirits are put into ſuch a motion as is wont to be connected with the exhilaration of the mind; and the ſoul, by the laws of the union of ſoul and body, hence feels pleaſure. The motion of the animal ſpirits does not firſt ariſe from any affection or apprehenſion of the mind whatſoever; but the very firſt thing that is felt, is an exhilaration of the animal ſpirits, and a pleaſant external ſenſation, it may be in their breaſts. Hence through ignorance, the perſon being ſurprized, begins to think, ſurely this is the Holy Ghoſt coming into him. And then the mind begins to be affected and raiſed: there is firſt great joy; and then many other affections, in a very tumultuous manner, putting all nature, both body and mind, into a mighty ruffle. For though, as I obſerved before, it is the ſoul only that is *the ſeat of the affections*; yet this hinders not but that bodily ſenſations may, in this manner, be *an occaſion of affections* in the mind.

And if mens religious affections do truly ariſe from ſome inſtruction or light in the underſtanding; yet the affection is not gracious, unleſs the light which is the ground of it be ſpiritual. Affections may be excited by that underſtanding of things, which they obtain merely by human teaching, with the common improvement of the faculties of the mind. Men may be much affected by knowlege of things of religion that they ob-

tain this way; as ſome philoſophers have been mightily affected, and almoſt carried beyond themſelves, by the diſcoveries they have made in mathematicks and natural philoſophy. So men may be much affected from common illuminations of the Spirit of God, in which God aſſiſts mens faculties to a greater degree of that kind of underſtanding of religious matters, which they have in ſome degree, by only the ordinary exerciſe and improvement of their own faculties. Such illuminations may much affect the mind; as in many whom we read of in ſcripture, *that were once enlightened*: but theſe affections are not ſpiritual.

There is ſuch a thing, if the ſcriptures are of any uſe to teach us any thing, as a ſpiritual, ſupernatural underſtanding of divine things, that is peculiar to the ſaints, and which thoſe who are not ſaints have nothing of. It is certainly a kind of underſtanding, apprehending or diſcerning of divine things, that natural men have nothing of, which the apoſtle ſpeaks of, 1 Cor. ii. 14. "But the natural men receiveth not the things of "the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; nei- "ther can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcern- "ed." It is certainly a kind of ſeeing or diſcerning ſpiritual things peculiar to the ſaints, which is ſpoken of, 1 John iii. 6. "Whoſoever ſinneth, hath not ſeen him, neither known him." 3 John 11. "He that doth evil, hath not ſeen God." And John vi. 40. "This is the will of him that ſent me, that eve- "ry one that ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have "everlaſting life." Chap. xiv. 19. "The world ſeeth me no "more; but ye ſee me." Chap. xvii. 3. "This is eternal life, "that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus "Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent." Matth. xi. 27. "No man "knoweth the Son, but the Father: neither knoweth any man "the Father, but the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will "reveal him." John xii. 45. "He that ſeeth me, ſeeth him "that ſent me." Pſal. ix. 10. "They that know thy name, "will put their truſt in thee." Phil. iii. 8. "I count all things "but loſs, for the excellency of the knowlege of Chriſt Jeſus "my Lord:"—verſ. 10. "That I may know him."—And innumerable other places there are, all over the Bible, which ſhew the ſame. And that there is ſuch a thing as an underſtanding of divine things, which in its nature and kind is wholly different from all knowlege that natural men have, is evident from this, that there is an underſtanding of divine

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things, which the ſcripture calls ſpiritual underſtanding: Col. i. 9. "We do not ceaſe to pray for you, and to deſire that you "may be filled with the knowlege of his will, in all wiſ- "dom and ſpiritual underſtanding." It has been already ſhown that that which is *ſpiritual*, in the ordinary uſe of the word in the New Teſtament, is entirely different in nature and kind, from all which natural men are, or can be the ſubjects of.

From hence it may be ſurely inferred, wherein ſpiritual underſtanding conſiſts. For if there be in the ſaints a kind of apprehenſion or perception, which is in its nature perfectly diverſe from all that natural men have, or that it is poſſible they ſhould have, until they have a new nature; it muſt conſiſt in their having a certain kind of ideas or ſenſations of mind, which are ſimply diverſe from all that is or can be in the minds of natural men. And that is the ſame thing as to ſay, that it conſiſts in the ſenſations of a new ſpiritual ſenſe, which the ſouls of natural men have not; as is evident by what has been before, once and again obſerved. But I have already ſhown what that new ſpiritual ſenſe is, which the ſaints have given them in regeneration, and what is the object of it. I have ſhown that the immediate object of it is the ſupreme beauty and excellency of the nature of divine things, as they are in themſelves. And this is agreeable to the ſcripture: the apoſtle very plainly teaches, that the great thing diſcovered by ſpiritual light, and underſtood by ſpiritual knowlege, is the glory of divine things, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. "But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to "them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blind- "ed the minds of them that believe not, leaſt the light of the "glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould "ſhine unto him:" together with verſ. 6. "For God, who "commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in- "to our hearts, to give the light of the knowlege of the glory "of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt." And chap. iii. 18. preceding, "But we all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs "the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from "glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." And it muſt needs be ſo, for as has been before obſerved, the ſcripture often teaches, that all true religion ſummarily conſiſts in the love of divine things. And therefore that kind of underſtanding or knowlege, which is the proper foundation of true religion, muſt be the knowlege of the *loveline/s of divine things*. For doubtleſs, that knowlege which is the proper foundation of *love*, is

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the knowlege of *lovelineſs*. What that beauty or lovelineſs of divine things is, which is the proper and immediate object of a ſpiritual ſenſe of mind, was ſhewed under the laſt head inſiſted on, *viz.* That it is the beauty of their moral perfection. Therefore it is in the view or ſenſe of this, that ſpiritual underſtanding does more immediately and primarily conſiſt. And indeed it is plain it can be nothing elſe; for (as has been ſhown) there is nothing pertaining to divine things, beſides the beauty of their moral excellency, and thoſe properties and qualities of divine things which this beauty is the foundation of, but what natural men and devils can ſee and know, and will know fully and clearly to all eternity.

From what has been ſaid, therefore, we come neceſſarily to this concluſion, concerning that wherein ſpiritual underſtanding conſiſts; *viz.* That it conſiſts in *a ſenſe of the heart, of the ſupreme beauty and ſweetneſs of the holineſs or moral perfection of divine things, together with all that diſcerning and knowlege of things of religion, that depends upon, and flows from ſuch a ſenſe.*

Spiritual underſtanding conſiſts primarily in *a ſenſe of heart of that ſpiritual beauty.* I ſay, a *ſenſe of heart*; for it is not ſpeculation merely that is concerned in this kind of underſtanding; nor can there be a clear diſtinction made between the two faculties of underſtanding and will, as acting diſtinctly and ſeparately, in this matter. When the mind is ſenſible of the ſweet beauty and amiableneſs of a thing, that implies a ſenſibleneſs of ſweetneſs and delight in the preſence of the idea of it: and this ſenſibleneſs of the amiableneſs or delightfulneſs of beauty, carries in the very nature of it, *the ſenſe of the heart*; or an effect and impreſſion the ſoul is the ſubject of, as a ſubſtance poſſeſſed of taſte, inclination and will.

There is a diſtinction to be made between a mere *notional underſtanding*, wherein the mind only beholds things in the exerciſe of a ſpeculative faculty; and *the ſenſe of the heart*, wherein the mind does not only *ſpeculate* and *behold*, but *reliſhes* and *feels*. That ſort of knowlege, by which a man has a ſenſible perception of amiableneſs and loathſomeneſs, or of ſweetneſs and nauſeouſneſs, is not juſt the ſame ſort of knowlege with that, by which he knows what a triangle is, and what a ſquare is. The one is mere ſpeculative knowlege; the other ſenſible knowlege, in which more than the mere intellect is concerned; the heart is the proper ſubject of it, or the ſoul as a being that not only beholds, but has inclination, and is pleaſed or diſpleaſed. And yet there is the nature of inſtruction

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in it; as he that has perceived the ſweet taſte of honey, knows much more about it, than he who has only looked upon and felt of it.

The apoſtle ſeems to make a diſtinction between mere ſpeculative knowlege of the things of religion, and ſpiritual knowledge, in calling that *the form of knowlege, and of the truth*: Rom. ii. 20. "Which haſt the form of knowlege, and of the truth in the law." The latter is often repreſented by reliſhing, ſmelling, or taſting; 2 Cor. ii. 14. "Now thanks be to God, which always cauſeth us to triumph in Chriſt Jeſus, and maketh manifeſt the favor of his knowlege in every place." Matth. xvi. 23. "Thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but thoſe things that be of men." 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. "As new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if ſo be ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious." Cant. i. 3. "Becauſe of the *ſavour* of thy good ointments, thy name *is as ointment poured forth*, therefore do the virgins love thee:" compared with 1 John ii. 20. "But ye have an *unction* from the holy One, and ye know all things." Spiritual underſtanding *primarily* conſiſts in this *ſenſe, or taſte of the moral beauty of divine things*; ſo that no knowlege can be called ſpiritual, any further than it ariſes from this, and has this in it. But *ſecondarily*, it includes *all that diſcerning and knowlege of things of religion, which depends upon, and flows from ſuch a ſenſe*.

When the true beauty and amiableneſs of the holineſs or true moral good that is in divine things, is diſcovered to the ſoul, it as it were opens a new world to its view. This ſhews the glory of all the perfections of God, and of every thing appertaining to the divine Being. For as was obſerved before, the beauty of all ariſes from God's moral perfection. This ſhews the glory of all God's works, both of creation and providence. For it is the ſpecial glory of them, that God's holineſs, righteouſneſs, faithfulneſs, and goodneſs are ſo manifeſted in them; and without theſe moral perfections, there would be no glory in that power and ſkill with which they are wrought. The glorifying of God's moral perfections, is the ſpecial end of all the works of God's hands. By this ſenſe of the moral beauty of divine things, is underſtood the ſufficiency of Chriſt as a Mediator: for it is only by the diſcovery of the beauty of the moral perfection of Chriſt, that the believer is let into the knowlege of the excellency of his perſon, ſo as to know any thing more of him than the devils do: and it is only by the knowlege of the excellency of Chriſt's perſon, that any know his ſufficiency as a

Mediator;

Mediator; for the latter depends upon, and ariſes from the former. It is by ſeeing the excellency of Chriſt's perſon, that the ſaints are made ſenſible of the preciouſneſs of his blood, and its ſufficiency to atone for ſin: for therein conſiſts the preciouſneſs of Chriſt's blood, that it is the blood of ſo excellent and amiable a perſon. And on this depends the meritorioufneſs of his obedience, and ſufficiency and prevalence of his interceſſion. By this ſight of the moral beauty of divine things, is ſeen the beauty of the way of ſalvation by Chriſt; for that conſiſts in the beauty of the moral perfections of God, which wonderfully ſhines forth in every ſtep of this method of ſalvation, from beginning to end. By this is ſeen the fitneſs and ſuitableneſs of this way; for this wholly conſiſts in its tendency to deliver us from ſin and hell, and to bring us to the happineſs which conſiſts in the poſſeſſion and enjoyment of moral good, in a way ſweetly agreeing with God's moral perfections. And in the way's being contrived ſo as to attain theſe ends, conſiſts the excellent wiſdom of that way. By this is ſeen the excellency of the word of God. Take away all the moral beauty and ſweetneſs in the word, and the Bible is left wholly a dead letter, a dry, lifeleſs, taſteleſs thing. By this is ſeen the true foundation of our duty, the worthineſs of God to be ſo eſteemed, honoured, loved, ſubmitted to, and ſerved, as he requires of us, and the amiableneſs of the duties themſelves that are required of us. And by this is ſeen the true evil of ſin: for he who ſees the beauty of holineſs, muſt neceſſarily ſee the hatefulneſs of ſin, its contrary. By this men underſtand the true glory of heaven, which conſiſts in the beauty and happineſs that is in holineſs. By this is ſeen the amiableneſs and happineſs of both ſaints and angels. He that ſees the beauty of holineſs, or true moral good, ſees the greateſt and moſt important thing in the world, which is the fulneſs of all things, without which all the world is empty, no better than nothing, yea, worſe than nothing. Unleſs this is ſeen, nothing is ſeen that is worth the ſeeing; for there is no other true excellency or beauty. Unleſs this be underſtood, nothing is underſtood that is worthy of the exerciſe of the noble faculty of underſtanding. This is the beauty of the Godhead, and the divinity of divinity, (if I may ſo ſpeak,) the good of the infinite fountain of good; without which God himſelf (if that were poſſible to be) would be an infinite evil; without which, we ourſelves had better never have been; and without which there had better have been no being. He therefore in effect knows nothing, that knows not this; his knowlege is but the ſhadow of knowlege, or the form of knowlege, as the apoſtle calls it. Well

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therefore may the ſcripture repreſent thoſe who are deſtitute of that ſpiritual ſenſe, by which is perceived the beauty of holineſs, as totally blind, deaf, and ſenſeleſs, yea, dead. And well may regeneration, in which this divine ſenſe is given to the ſoul by its Creator, be repreſented as opening the blind eyes, and raiſing the dead, and bringing a perſon into a new world. For if what has been ſaid be conſidered, it will be manifeſt, that when a perſon has this ſenſe and knowlege given him, he will view nothing as he did before; though before he *knew* all things *after the fleſh, yet henceforth he will know them ſo no more*; and *he is become a new creature, old things are paſſed away, behold, all things are become new*; agreeable to 2 Cor. v. 16, 17.

And beſides the things that have been already mentioned, there ariſes from this ſenſe of ſpiritual beauty, all true experimental knowlege of religion, which is of itſelf as it were a new world of knowlege. He that ſees not the beauty of holineſs, knows not what one of the graces of God's Spirit is, he is deſtitute of any idea or conception of all gracious exerciſes of ſoul, and all holy comforts and delights, and all effects of the ſaving influences of the Spirit of God on the heart; and ſo is ignorant of the greateſt works of God, the moſt important and glorious effects of his power upon the creature; and alſo is wholly ignorant of the ſaints as ſaints, he knows not what they are; and in effect is ignorant of the whole ſpiritual world.

Things being thus, it plainly appears, that God's implanting that ſpiritual ſupernatural ſenſe which has been ſpoken of, makes a great change in a man. And were it not for the very imperfect degree, in which this ſenſe is commonly given at firſt, or the ſmall degree of this glorious light that firſt dawns upon the ſoul; the change made by this ſpiritual opening of the eyes in converſion, would be much greater, and more remarkable every way, than if a man, who had been born blind, and with only the other four ſenſes, ſhould continue ſo a long time, and then at once ſhould have the ſenſe of ſeeing imparted to him in the midſt of the clear light of the ſun, diſcovering a world of viſible objects. For though ſight be more noble than any of the other external ſenſes, yet this ſpiritual ſenſe which has been ſpoken of, is infinitely more noble than that, or any other principle of diſcerning that a man naturally has, and the object of this ſenſe infinitely greater and more important.

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This ſort of underſtanding or knowlege, is that knowlege of divine things from whence all truly gracious affections do proceed; by which therefore all affections are to be tried. Thoſe affections that ariſe wholly from any other kind of knowlege, or do reſult from any other kind of apprehenſions of mind, are vain. †

From what has been ſaid, may be learned wherein the moſt eſſential difference lies between that light or underſtanding which is given by the common influences of the Spirit of God, on the hearts of natural men, and that ſaving inſtruction which is given to the ſaints. The latter primarily and moſt eſſentially lies in beholding the holy beauty that is in divine things; which is the only *true* moral good, and which the ſoul of fallen man is by nature totally blind to. The former conſiſts only in a further underſtanding, through the aſſiſtance of natural principles, of thoſe things which men may know, in ſome meaſure, by the alone ordinary exerciſe of their faculties. And this knowlege conſiſts only in the knowlege of thoſe things pertaining

† "Take heed of contenting yourſelves with every kind of knowlege. Do not worſhip every image of your own heads; eſpecially you that fall ſhort of truth, or the knowlege of it. For when you have ſome, there may be yet that wanting, which may make you ſincere. There are many men of great knowlege, able to teach themſelves, and others too; and yet their hearts are unſound. How comes this to paſs? Is it becauſe they have ſo much light? No; but becauſe they want much. And therefore content not yourſelves with every knowlege. There is ſome knowlege which men have by the light of nature, (which leaves them without excuſe) from the book of creation; ſome by power of education; ſome by the light of the law, whereby men know their ſin and evils; ſome by the letter of the goſpel; and ſo men may know much, and ſpeak well; and ſo in ſeeing, ſee not: ſome by the Spirit, and may ſee much, ſo as to prophecy in Chriſt's name, and yet bid depart, Matth. vii. Now there is *a light of glory*, whereby the elect ſee things in another manner: to tell you how, they cannot: it is the beginning of light in heaven: and the ſame Spirit that fills Chriſt, filling their minds, that they know, by this anointing, all things; which if ever you have, you muſt become babes and fools in your own eyes. God will never write his law in your minds, until all the ſcribblings of it are blotted out. Account all your knowlege loſs for the gaining of this. It is ſad to ſee many a man pleaſing himſelf in his own dreaming deluſions; yet the poor creature in ſeeing, ſees not; which is God's heavy curſe upon men under greateſt means, and which lays all waſte and deſolate," *Shepard's Parable*, Part. I. p. 147.

taining to religion, which are *natural*. Thus for inſtance, in thoſe awakenings and convictions of conſcience, that natural men are often ſubject to, the Spirit of God gives no knowlege of the true *moral* beauty which is in divine things; but only aſſiſts the mind to a clearer idea of the guilt of ſin, or its relation to a puniſhment, and connection with the *evil of ſuffering*, (without any ſight of its true *moral* evil, or odiouſneſs as ſin,) and a clearer idea of the *natural* perfections of God, wherein conſiſts, not his holy beauty and glory, but his awful and terrible greatneſs. It is a clear ſight of this, that will fully awaken the conſciences of wicked men at the day of judgment, *without any ſpiritual light*. And it is a leſſer degree of the ſame, that awakens the conſciences of natural men, *without ſpiritual light*, in this world. The ſame diſcoveries are in ſome meaſure given in the conſcience of an awakened ſinner in this world, which will be given more fully in the conſciences of ſinners at the day of judgment. The ſame kind of ſight or apprehenſion of God, in a leſſer degree makes awakened ſinners in this world ſenſible of the dreadful guilt of ſin, againſt ſo great and terrible a God, and ſenſible of its amazing puniſhment, and fills them with fearful apprehenſions of divine wrath; that will thoroughly convince all wicked men, of the infinitely dreadful nature and guilt of ſin, and aſtoniſh them with apprehenſions of wrath, when Chriſt ſhall come in the glory of his power and majeſty, and every eye ſhall ſee him, and all the kindreds of the earth ſhall wail becauſe of him. And in thoſe common illuminations, which are ſometimes given to natural men, exciting in them ſome kind of religious deſire, love and joy, the mind is only aſſiſted to a clearer apprehenſion of the *natural good* that is in divine things. Thus ſometimes, under common illuminations, men are raiſed with the ideas of the natural good that is in heaven; as its outward glory, its eaſe, its honor and advancement, a being there the objects of the high favour of God, and the great reſpect of men and angels, &c. So there are many things exhibited in the goſpel, concerning God and Chriſt, and the way of ſalvation, that have a *natural* good in them, which ſuits the natural principle of ſelf-love. Thus in that great goodneſs of God to ſinners, and the wonderful dying love of Chriſt, there is a natural good, which all men love, as they love themſelves; as well as a ſpiritual and holy beauty, which is ſeen only by the regenerate. Therefore there are many things appertaining to the word

of God's grace delivered in the goſpel, which may cauſe natural men, when they hear it, *anon with joy to receive it.* All that love which natural men have to God, and Chriſt, and Chriſtian virtues, and good men, is not from any ſight of the amiableneſs of the holineſs, or true *moral* excellency of theſe things; but only for the ſake of the *natural* good there is in them. All natural mens hatred of ſin, is as much from principles of nature, as mens hatred of a tyger for his rapaciouſneſs, or their averſion to a ſerpent for his poiſon and hurtfulneſs: and all their love of Chriſtian virtue, is from no higher principle than their love of a man's good nature, which appears amiable to natural men; but no otherwiſe than ſilver and gold appears amiable in the eyes of a merchant, or than the blackneſs of the ſoil is beautiful in the eyes of the farmer.

From what has been ſaid of the nature of ſpiritual underſtanding, it appears, that ſpiritual underſtanding does not conſiſt in any new doctrinal knowlege, or in having ſuggeſted to the mind any new propoſition, not before read or heard of: for it is plain, that this ſuggeſting of new propoſitions, is a thing entirely diverſe from giving the mind a new taſte or reliſh of beauty and ſweetneſs. * It is alſo evident, that ſpiritual knowlege does not conſiſt in any new doctrinal explanation of any part of the ſcripture; for ſtill, this is but doctrinal knowlege, or the knowlege of propoſitions; the doctrinal explaining of any part of ſcripture, is only giving us to underſtand, what are the propoſitions contained or taught in that part of ſcripture.

Hence it appears, that the *ſpiritual underſtanding* of the ſcripture, does not conſiſt in opening to the mind the myſtical meaning of the ſcripture, in its parables, types and allegories; for this is only a doctrinal explication of the ſcripture. He that explains

* Calvin, in his Inſtitutions, Book I. Chap. ix. § 1. ſays, "It is not the office of the Spirit that is promiſed us, to make new and before unheard-of revelations, or to coin ſome new kind of doctrine, which tends to draw us away from the received doctrine of the goſpel; but to ſeal and confirm to us that very doctrine which is by the goſpel." And in the ſame place he ſpeaks of ſome, that in thoſe days maintained the contrary notion, *pretending to be immediately led by the Spirit, as perſons that were governed by a moſt haughty ſelf conceit; and not ſo properly to be looked upon as only labouring under a miſtake, as driven by a ſort of raving madneſs.*

explains what is meant by the ſtony ground, and the ſeed's ſpringing up ſuddenly, and quickly withering away, only explains what propoſitions or doctrines are taught in it. So he that explains what is typified by Jacob's ladder, and the angels of God aſcending and deſcending on it, or what was typified by Joſhua's leading Iſrael through Jordan, only ſhews what propoſitions are hid in theſe paſſages. And many men can explain theſe types, who have no ſpiritual knowlege. It is poſſible that a man might know how to interpret all the types, parables, enigmas, and allegories in the Bible, and not have one beam of ſpiritual light in his mind; becauſe he may not have the leaſt degree of that ſpiritual ſenſe of the holy beauty of divine things which has been ſpoken of, and may ſee nothing of this kind of glory in any thing contained in any of theſe myſteries, or any other part of the ſcripture. It is plain, by what the apoſtle ſays, that a man might underſtand all ſuch myſteries, and have no ſaving grace; 1 Cor. xiii. 2. "And though I "have the gift of prophecy, and underſtand all myſteries, and "all knowlege, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." They therefore are very fooliſh, who are exalted in an opinion of their own ſpiritual attainments, from notions that come into their minds, of the myſtical meaning of theſe and thoſe paſſages of ſcripture, as though it was a ſpiritual underſtanding of theſe paſſages, immediately given them by the Spirit of God, and hence have their affections highly raiſed: and what has been ſaid, ſhews the vanity of ſuch affections.

From what has been ſaid, it is alſo evident, that it is not ſpiritual knowlege, for perſons to be informed of their duty, by having it immediately ſuggeſted to their minds, that ſuch and ſuch outward actions or deeds are the will of God. If we ſuppoſe that it is truly God's manner thus to ſignify his will to his people, by immediate inward ſuggeſtions, ſuch ſuggeſtions have nothing of the nature of ſpiritual light. Such kind of knowlege would only be one kind of doctrinal knowlege: a propoſition concerning the will of God, is as properly a doctrine of religion, as a propoſition concerning the nature of God, or a work of God: and an having either of theſe kinds of propoſitions, or any other propoſition, declared to a man, either by ſpeech or inward ſuggeſtion, differs vaſtly from an having the holy beauty of divine things manifeſted to the ſoul, wherein ſpiritual knowlege does moſt eſſentially conſiſt. Thus there was no ſpiritual light in Balaam; though he had the will of

God

God immediately ſuggeſted to him by the Spirit of God from time to time, concerning the way that he ſhould go, and what he ſhould do and ſay.

It is manifeſt therefore, that a being led and directed in this manner, is not that holy and ſpiritual *leading of the Spirit of God*, which is peculiar to the ſaints, and a diſtinguiſhing mark of the ſons of God, ſpoken of Rom. viii. 14. "For as "many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the ſons of God." Gal. v. 18. "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under "the law."

And if perſons have the will of God concerning their actions, ſuggeſted to them by ſome text of ſcripture, ſuddenly and extraordinarily brought to their minds, which text, as the words lay in the Bible before they came to their minds, related to the action and behaviour of ſome other perſon, but they ſuppoſe, as God ſent the words to them, he intended ſomething further by them, and meant ſuch a particular action of theirs; I ſay, if perſons ſhould have the will of God thus ſuggeſted to them with texts of ſcripture, it alters not the caſe. The ſuggeſtion being accompanied with an apt text of ſcripture, does not make the ſuggeſtion to be the nature of ſpiritual inſtruction. As for inſtance, if a perſon in New-England, on ſome occaſion, were at a loſs whether it was his duty to go into ſome popiſh or heatheniſh land, where he was like to be expoſed to many difficulties and dangers, and ſhould pray to God that he would ſhew him the way of his duty; and after earneſt prayer, ſhould have thoſe words which God ſpake to Jacob, Gen. xlvi. ſuddenly and extraordinarily brought to his mind, as if they were ſpoken to him; "Fear not to go down into Egypt; and I will "go with thee; and I will alſo ſurely bring thee up again." In which words, though as they lay in the Bible before they came to his mind, they related only to Jacob, and his behavior; yet he ſuppoſes that God has a further meaning, as they were brought and applied to him; that thus they are to be underſtood in a new ſenſe, that by Egypt is to be underſtood this particular country he has in his mind, and that the action intended is his going thither, and that the meaning of the promiſe is, that God would bring him back into New-England again. There is nothing of the nature of a ſpiritual or gracious leading of the Spirit in this; for there is nothing of the nature of ſpiritual underſtanding in it. Thus to underſtand texts of ſcripture, is not to have a ſpiritual underſtanding of them. Spiritually to underſtand

underſtand the ſcripture, is rightly to underſtand what *is in* the ſcripture, and what *was in* it before it was underſtood; it is to underſtand rightly, what *uſed to be contained in* the meaning of it, and not the making a new meaning. When the mind is enlightened ſpiritually and rightly to underſtand the ſcripture, it is enabled to ſee that in the ſcripture, which before was not ſeen, *by reaſon of blindneſs*. But if it was by reaſon of blindneſs, that is an evidence that the ſame meaning was in it before, otherwiſe it would have been no blindneſs not to ſee it; it is no blindneſs not to ſee a meaning which is not there. Spiritually enlightening the eyes to underſtand the ſcripture, is *to open the eyes*, Pſal. cxix. 18. "Open thou mine eyes, that I "may behold wondrous things out of thy law;" which argues that the reaſon why the ſame was not ſeen in the ſcripture before, was, that the eyes were *ſhut*; which would not be the caſe, if the meaning that is now underſtood was not there before, but is now newly added to the ſcripture, by the manner of the ſcripture's coming to my mind. This making a new meaning to the ſcripture, is the ſame thing as making a new ſcripture; it is properly adding to the word, which is threatened with ſo dreadful a curſe. Spiritually to underſtand the ſcripture, is to have the eyes of the mind opened, to behold the wonderful ſpiritual excellency of the glorious things contained in the true meaning of it, and that always were contained in it, ever ſince it was written: to behold the amiable and bright manifeſtations of the divine perfections, and of the excellency and ſufficiency of Chriſt, and the excellency and ſuitableneſs of the way of ſalvation by Chriſt, and the ſpiritual glory of the precepts and promiſes of the ſcripture, &c. which things are and always were in the Bible, and would have been ſeen before, if it had not been for blindneſs, without having any new ſenſe added, by the words being ſent by God to a particular perſon, and ſpoken anew to him, with a new meaning.

And as to a gracious *leading of the Spirit*, it conſiſts in two things; partly in *inſtructing* a perſon in his duty by the Spirit, and partly in powerfully *inducing* him to comply with that inſtruction. But ſo far as the gracious leading of the Spirit lies in inſtruction, it conſiſts in a perſon's being guided by a ſpiritual and diſtinguiſhing taſte of that which has in it true moral beauty. I have ſhewn that ſpiritual knowlege primarily conſiſts in a taſte or reliſh of the amiableneſs and beauty of that which is truly good and holy: this holy reliſh is a thing that

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diſcerns and diſtinguiſhes between good and evil, between holy and unholy, without being at the trouble of a train of reaſoning. As he who has a true reliſh of external beauty, knows what is beautiful by looking upon it; he ſtands in no need of a train of reaſoning about the proportion of the features, in order to determine whether that which he ſees be a beautiful countenance or no; he needs nothing but only the glance of his eye. He who has a rectified muſical ear, knows whether the ſound he hears be true harmony; he does not need firſt to be at the trouble of the reaſonings of a mathematician, about the proportion of the notes. He that has a rectified palate, knows what is good food, as ſoon as he taſtes it, without the reaſoning of a phyſician about it. There is a holy beauty and ſweetneſs in words and actions, as well as a natural beauty in countenances and ſounds, and ſweetneſs in food; Job. xii. 11. "Doth not the ear try words, and the mouth taſte his meet?" When a holy and amiable action is ſuggeſted to the thoughts of a holy ſoul; that ſoul, if in the lively exerciſe of its ſpiritual taſte, at once ſees a beauty in it, and ſo inclines to it, and cloſes with it. On the contrary, if an unworthy unholy action be ſuggeſted to it, its ſanctified eye ſees no beauty in it, and is not pleaſed with it; its ſanctified taſte reliſhes no ſweetneſs in it, but on the contrary, it is nauſeous to it. Yea its holy taſte and appetite leads it to think of that which is truly lovely, and naturally ſuggeſts it; as a healthy taſte and appetite naturally ſuggeſts the idea of its proper object. Thus a holy perſon is led by the Spirit, as he is inſtructed and led by his holy taſte, and diſpoſition of heart; whereby, in the lively exerciſe of grace, he eaſily diſtinguiſhes good and evil, and knows at once what is a ſuitable amiable behaviour towards God, and towards man, in this caſe and the other; and judges what is right, as it were ſpontaneouſly, and of himſelf, without a particular deduction, by any other arguments than the beauty that is ſeen, and goodneſs that is taſted. Thus Chriſt blames the Phariſees, that they *did not, even of their ownſelves, judge what was right*, without needing miracles to prove it, Luke xii. 57. The apoſtle ſeems plainly to have reſpect to this way of judging of ſpiritual beauty, in Rom. xii. 2. "Be ye transformed by the "renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, "and perfect, and acceptable will of God."

There is ſuch a thing as *good taſte* of *natural* beauty, (which learned men often ſpeak of,) that is exerciſed about *temporal* things,

things, in judging of them; as about the juſtneſs of a ſpeech, the goodneſs of ſtyle, the beauty of a poem, the gracefulneſs of deportment, &c. A late great philoſopher of our nation, writes thus upon it*; "To have *a taſte*, is to give things "their real value, to be touched with the good, to be ſhocked "with the ill; not to be dazzled with falſe luſtres, but in "ſpight of all colours, and every thing that might deceive "or amuſe, to judge ſoundly. *Taſte* and *judgment* then "ſhould be the ſame thing; and yet it is eaſy to diſcern a "difference. The *judgment* forms its opinions from reflec- "tion: the reaſon on this occaſion fetches a kind of circuit, "to arrive at its end; it ſuppoſes principles, it draws conſe- "quences, and it judges; but not without a thorough know- "lege of the caſe; ſo that after it has pronounced, it is rea- "dy to render a reaſon of its decrees. *Good taſte* obſerves "none of theſe formalities; ere it has time to conſult, it has "taken its ſide; as ſoon as ever the object is preſented it, "the impreſſion is made, the ſentiment formed, aſk no more "of it. As the ear is wounded with a harſh ſound, as the "ſmell is ſoothed with an agreeable odour, before ever the "reaſon have meddled with thoſe objects to judge of them, "ſo the *taſte* opens itſelf at once, and prevents all reflection. "They may come afterwards to confirm it, and diſcover the "ſecret reaſons of its conduct; but it was not in its power to "wait for them. Frequently it happens not to know them at "all, and what pains ſoever it uſes, cannot diſcover what it was "determined it to think as it did. This conduct is very dif- "ferent from that the *judgment* obſerves in its deciſions: "unleſs we chuſe to ſay, that *good taſte* is as it were a firſt "motion, or a kind of inſtinct of right reaſon, which hurries "on with rapidity, and conducts more ſecurely than all the "reaſonings ſhe could make; it is a firſt glance of the eye, "which diſcovers to us the nature and relations of things in a "moment."

Now as there is ſuch a kind of *taſte* of the mind as this, which philoſophers ſpeak of, whereby perſons are guided in their judgment, of the natural beauty, gracefulneſs, propriety, nobleneſs and ſublimity of ſpeeches and actions, whereby they judge as it were by the glance of the eye, or by inward ſenſa- tion, and the firſt impreſſion of the object; ſo there is likewiſe

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* Chambers's Dictionary, under the word TASTE.

ſuch a thing as a *divine taſte*, given and maintained by the Spirit of God, in the hearts of the ſaints, whereby they are in like manner led and guided in diſcerning and diſtinguiſhing the true ſpiritual and holy beauty of actions; and that more eaſily, readily, and accurately, as they have more or leſs of the Spirit of God dwelling in them. And thus *the ſons of God are led by the Spirit of God, in their behaviour in the world.*

A holy diſpoſition and ſpiritual taſte, where grace is ſtrong and lively, will enable a ſoul to determine what actions are right and becoming Chriſtians, not only more ſpeedily, but far more exactly, than the greateſt abilities without it. This may be illuſtrated by the manner in which ſome habits of mind, and diſpoſitions of heart, of a nature inferior to true grace, will teach and guide a man in his actions. As for inſtance, if a man be a very good natured man, his good nature will teach him better how to act benevolently amongſt mankind, and will direct him, on every occaſion, to thoſe ſpeeches and actions, which are agreeable to rules of goodneſs, than the ſtrongeſt reaſon will a man of a moroſe temper. So if a man's heart be under the influence of an entire friendſhip, and moſt endeared affection to another; though he be a man of an indifferent capacity, yet this habit of his mind will direct him, far more readily and exactly, to a ſpeech and deportment, or manner of behaviour, which ſhall in all reſpects be ſweet and kind, and agreeable to a benevolent diſpoſition of heart, than the greateſt capacity without it. He has as it were a ſpirit within him, that guides him; the habit of his mind is attended with a taſte, by which he immediately reliſhes that air and mien which is benevolent, and diſreliſhes the contrary, and cauſes him to diſtinguiſh between one and the other *in a moment*, more preciſely, than the moſt accurate reaſonings can find out *in many hours*. As the nature and inward tendency of a ſtone, or other heavy body, that is let fall from a loft, ſhews the way to the centre of the earth, more exactly in an inſtant, than the ableſt mathematician, without it, could determine, by his moſt accurate obſervations, in a whole day. Thus it is that a ſpiritual diſpoſition and taſte teaches and guides a man in his behaviour in the world. So an eminently humble, or meek, or charitable diſpoſition, will direct a perſon of mean capacity to ſuch a behaviour, as is agreeable to Chriſtian rules of humility, meekneſs and charity, far more readily and preciſely, than the moſt diligent ſtudy, and elaborate reaſonings, of a man of the ſtrongeſt faculties,

faculties, who has not a Chriſtian ſpirit within him. So alſo will a ſpirit of love to God, and holy fear and reverence towards God, and filial confidence in God, and an heavenly diſpoſition, teach and guide a man in his behaviour.

It is an exceeding difficult thing for a wicked man, deſtitute of Chriſtian principles in his heart, to guide him, to know how to demean himſelf like a Chriſtian, with the life, and beauty, and heavenly ſweetneſs of a truly holy humble, Chriſt-like behaviour. He knows not how to put on theſe garments. neither do they fit him; Eccl. x. 2, 3. "A wiſe man's heart "is at his right hand; but a fool's heart is at his left. Yea "alſo, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wiſdom "faileth him, and he ſaith to every one that he is a fool:" with verſ. 15. "The labor of the fooliſh wearieth every one of "them, becauſe he knoweth not how to go to the city." Prov. x. 32. "The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable." Chap. xv. 2. "The tongue of the wiſe uſeth knowlege aright: "but the mouth of fools poureth out fooliſhneſs." And chap. xvi. 23. "The heart of the righteous teacheth his mouth, and "addeth learning to his lips."

The ſaints in thus judging of actions by a ſpiritual taſte, have not a particular recourſe to the expreſs rules of God's word, with reſpect to every word and action that is before them, the good or evil of which they thus judge of: but yet their taſte itſelf in general, is ſubject to the rule of God's word, and muſt be tried by that, and a right reaſoning upon it. As a man of a rectified palate judges of particular morſels by his taſte; but yet his palate itſelf muſt be judged of, whether it be right or no, by certain rules and reaſons. But a ſpiritual taſte of ſoul, mightily helps the ſoul, in its reaſonings on the word of God, and in judging of the true meaning of its rules; as it removes the prejudices of a depraved appetite, and naturally leads the thoughts in the right channel, caſts a light on the word of God, and cauſes the true meaning moſt naturally to come to mind, through the harmony there is between the diſpoſition and reliſh of a ſanctified ſoul, and the true meaning of the rules of God's word. Yea, this harmony tends to bring the texts themſelves to mind, on proper occaſions; as the particular ſtate of the ſtomach and palate, tends to bring ſuch particular meats and drinks to mind, as are agreeable to that ſtate. Thus *the children of God are led by the Spirit of God* in judging of actions themſelves, and in their meditations upon, and judg-

ing of, and applying the rules of God's holy word : and ſo God *teaches them his ſtatutes, and cauſes them to underſtand the way of his precepts* ; which the pſalmiſt ſo often prays for.

But this leading of the Spirit is a thing exceeding diverſe from that which ſome call ſo ; which conſiſts not in teaching them God's ſtatutes and precepts, that he has already given ; but in giving them new precepts, by immediate inward ſpeech or ſuggeſtion ; and has in it no taſting the true excellency of things, or judging or diſcerning the nature of things at all. They do not determine what is the will of God by any taſte or reliſh, or any manner of judgment of the nature of things, but by an immediate dictate concerning the thing to be done ; there is no ſuch thing as any judgment or wiſdom in the caſe. Whereas in that leading of the Spirit which is peculiar to God's children, is imparted that true wiſdom, and holy diſcretion, ſo often ſpoken of in the word of God ; which is high above the other way, as the ſtars are higher than a glow-worm ; and that which Balaam and Saul (who ſometimes were led by the Spirit in that other way) never had, and no natural man can have, without a change of nature.

What has been ſaid of the nature of ſpiritual underſtanding, as conſiſting moſt eſſentially in a divine ſupernatural ſenſe and reliſh of the heart, not only ſhews that there is nothing of it in this falſely ſuppoſed *leading of the Spirit*, which has been now ſpoken of; but alſo ſhows the difference between ſpiritual underſtanding, and all kinds and forms of enthuſiaſm, all imaginary ſights of God and Chriſt and heaven, all ſuppoſed witneſſing of the Spirit, and teſtimonies of the love of God by immediate inward ſuggeſtion ; and all impreſſions of future events, and immediate revelations of any ſecret facts whatſoever ; all enthuſiaſtical impreſſions and applications of words of ſcripture, as though they were words now immediately ſpoken by God to a particular perſon, in a new meaning, and carrying ſomething more in them, than the words contain as they lie in the Bible ; and all interpretations of the myſtical meaning of the ſcripture, by ſuppoſed immediate revelation. None of theſe things conſiſt in a divine ſenſe and reliſh of the *heart*, of the holy beauty and excellency of divine things ; nor have they any thing to do with ſuch a ſenſe ; but all conſiſt in impreſſions in the *head* ; all are to be referred to the head of *impreſſions on the imagination*, and conſiſt in the exciting external ideas in the mind, either in ideas of outward ſhapes and colours, or words

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ſpoken, or letters written, or ideas of things external and ſenſible, belonging to actions done, or events accompliſhed or to be accompliſhed. An enthuſiaſtical ſuppoſed manifeſtation of the love of God, is made by the exciting an idea of a ſmiling countenance, or ſome other pleaſant outward appearance, or by the idea of pleaſant words ſpoken, or written, excited in the imagination, or ſome pleaſant bodily ſenſation. So when perſons have an imaginary revelation of ſome ſecret fact, it is by exciting external ideas; either of ſome words, implying a declaration of that fact, or ſome viſible or ſenſible circumſtances of ſuch a fact. So the ſuppoſed leading of the Spirit, to do the will of God, in outward behaviour, is either by exciting the idea of words (which are outward things) in their minds, either the words of ſcripture or other words, which they look upon as an immediate command of God; or elſe by exciting and impreſſing ſtrongly the ideas of the outward actions themſelves. So when an interpretation of a ſcripture type or allegory, is immediately, in an extraordinary way, ſtrongly ſuggeſted, it is by ſuggeſting words, as though one ſecretly whiſpered and told the meaning; or by exciting other ideas in the imagination.

Such ſort of experiences and diſcoveries as theſe commonly raiſe the affections of ſuch as are deluded by them, to a great height, and make a mighty uproar in both ſoul and body. And a very great part of the falſe religion that has been in the world, from one age to another, conſiſts in ſuch diſcoveries as theſe, and in the affections that flow from them. In ſuch things conſiſted the experiences of the ancient Pythagoreans among the Heathen, and many others among them, who had ſtrange ecſtaſies and raptures, and pretended to a divine *afflatus*, and immediate revelations from heaven. In ſuch things as theſe ſeem to have conſiſted the experiences of the Eſſenes, an ancient ſect among the Jews, at, and after the times of the apoſtles. In ſuch things as theſe conſiſted the experiences of many of the ancient Gnoſtics, and the Montaniſts, and many other ſects of ancient heretics, in the primitive ages of the Chriſtian church. And in ſuch things as theſe conſiſted the pretended immediate converſe, with God and Chriſt, and ſaints and angels of heaven, of the Monks, Anchorites, and Recluſes, that formerly abounded in the church of Rome. In ſuch things conſiſted the pretended high experiences, and great ſpirituality of many ſects of enthuſiaſts, that ſwarmed in the world after the reformation; ſuch as the Anabaptiſts, Antinomians, and

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Familiſts, the followers of N. Stork, Th. Muncer, Jo. Becold, Henry Pfeifer, David George, Caſper Swenckfield, Henry Nicolas, Johannes Agricola Eiſlebius; and the many wild enthuſiaſts that were in England in the days of Oliver Cromwell; and the followers of Mrs. Hutchiſon, in New-England; as appears by the particular and large occounts given of all theſe ſects, by that eminently holy man, Mr. Samuel Rutherford, in his *Diſplay of the ſpiritual Antichriſt*. And in ſuch things as theſe conſiſted the experiences of the late French prophets, and their followers. And in theſe things ſeems to lie the religion of the many kinds of enthuſiaſts of the preſent day. It is by ſuch ſort of religion as this chiefly that Satan transforms himſelf into an angel of light: and it is that which he has ever moſt ſucceſsfully made uſe of to confound hopeful and happy revivals of religion, from the beginning of the Chriſtian church to this day. When the Spirit of God is poured out, to begin a glorious work, then the old ſerpent, as faſt as poſſible, and by all means introduces this baſtard religion, and mingles it with the true; which has from time to time ſoon brought all things into confuſion. The pernicious conſequence of it is not eaſily imagined or conceived of, until we ſee and are amazed with the awful effects of it, and the diſmal deſolation it has made. If the revival of true religion be very great in its beginning, yet if this baſtard comes in, there is danger of its doing as Gideon's baſtard Ahimelech did, who never left until he had ſlain all his threeſcore and ten true born ſons, excepting one, that was forced to flee. Great and ſtrict therefore ſhould be the watch and guard that miniſters maintain againſt ſuch things, eſpecially at a time of great awakening: for men, eſpecially the common people, are eaſily bewitched with ſuch things; they having ſuch a glaring and gliſtering ſhew of high religion; and the devil hiding his own ſhape, and appearing as an angel of light, that men may not be afraid of him, but may adore him.

The imagination or phantaſy ſeems to be that wherein are formed all thoſe deluſions of Satan, which thoſe are carried away with, who are under the influence of falſe religion, and counterfeit graces and affections. Here is the devil's grand lurking-place, the very neſt of foul and deluſive ſpirits. It is very much to be doubted, whether the devil can come at the ſoul of man, at all to affect it, or to excite any thought or motion, or produce any effect whatſoever in it, any other way, than by the phantaſy; which is that power of the ſoul, by which

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it receives, and is the ſubject of the ſpecies, or ideas of outward and ſenſible things. As to the laws and means which the Creator has eſtabliſhed, for the intercourſe and communication of unbodied ſpirits, we know nothing about them; we do not know by what medium they manifeſt their thoughts to each other, or excite thoughts in each other. But as to ſpirits that are united to bodies, thoſe bodies God has united them to are their medium of communication. They have no other medium of acting on other creatures, or being acted on by them, than the body. Therefore it is not to be ſuppoſed that Satan can excite any thought, or produce any effect in the ſoul of man, any otherwiſe, than by ſome motion of the animal ſpirits, or by cauſing ſome motion or alteration in ſomething which appertains to the body. There is this reaſon to think that the devil cannot produce thoughts in the ſoul immediately, or any other way than by the medium of the body, *viz.* that he cannot immediately ſee or know the thoughts of the ſoul: it is abundantly declared in the ſcripture, to be peculiar to the omniſcient God to do that. But it is not likely that the devil can *immediately produce* an effect, which is out of the reach of his *immediate view*. It ſeems unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that his immediate agency ſhould be out of his own ſight, or that it ſhould be impoſſible for him to ſee what he himſelf immediately does. Is it not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that any ſpirit or intelligent agent, ſhould by the act of his will, produce effects, according to his underſtanding, or agreeable to his own thoughts, and that immediately, and yet the effects produced, be beyond the reach of his underſtanding, or where he can have no immediate perception or diſcerning at all? But if this be ſo, that the devil cannot produce thoughts in the ſoul immediately, or any other way than by the animal ſpirits, or by the body, then it follows, that he never brings to paſs any thing in the ſoul, but by the imagination or phantaſy, or by exciting external ideas. For we know that alterations in the body, do immediately excite no other ſort of ideas in the mind, but external ideas, or ideas of the outward ſenſes, or ideas which are of the ſame outward nature. As to reflection, abſtraction, reaſoning, &c. and thoſe thoughts and inward motions which are the fruits of theſe acts of the mind, they are not the next effects of impreſſions on the body. So that it muſt be only by the imagination, that Satan has acceſs to the ſoul, to tempt and delude it, or ſuggeſt

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any thing to it. * And this ſeems to be the reaſon why perſons that are under the diſeaſe of melancholy, are commonly ſo viſibly and remarkably ſubject to the ſuggeſtions and temptations of Satan; that being a diſeaſe which peculiarly affects the animal ſpirits, and is attended with weakneſs of that part of the body which is the fountain of the animal ſpirits, even the brain, which is, as it were, the ſeat of the phantaſy. It is by impreſſions made on the brain, that any ideas are excited in the mind, by the motion of the animal ſpirits, or any changes made in the body. The brain being thus weakened and diſeaſed, it is leſs under the command of the higher faculties of the ſoul, and yields the more eaſily to extrinſic impreſſions, and is over-powered by the diſordered motions of the animal ſpirits; and ſo the devil

* "The imagination is that room of the ſoul, wherein the devil doth often appear. Indeed (to ſpeak exactly,) the devil hath no efficient power over the rational part of a man: he cannot change the will, he cannot alter the heart of a man. So that the utmoſt he can do, in tempting a man to ſin, is by ſuaſion and ſuggeſtion only. But then how doth the devil do this? Even by working upon the imagination. He obſerveth the temper, and bodily conſtitution of a man; and thereupon ſuggeſts to his fancy, and injects his fiery darts thereinto, by which the mind and will come to be wrought upon. The devil then, though he hath no imperious efficacy over thy will, yet becauſe he can thus ſtir and move thy imagination, and thou being naturally deſtitute of grace, canſt not withſtand theſe ſuggeſtions; hence it is that any ſin in thy imagination, though but in the outward works of the ſoul, yet doth quickly lay hold on all. And indeed, by this means do ariſe thoſe horrible deluſions, that are in many erroneous ways of religion: all is becauſe their imaginations are corrupted. Yea, how often are theſe diabolical deluſions of the imagination, taken for the gracious operations of God's Spirit?—It is from hence that many have pretended to enthuſiaſms;—they leave the ſcriptures, and wholly attend to what they perceive and feel within them." *Burgeſs on Original Sin*, p. 369.

The great Turretine, ſpeaking on that queſtion, *What is the power of Angels?* ſays, "As to bodies, there is no doubt, but that they can do a great deal upon all ſorts of elementary and ſublunary bodies, to move them locally, and variouſly to agitate them. It is alſo certain, that they can act upon the external and internal ſenſes, to excite them, or to bind them. But as to the rational ſoul itſelf, they can do nothing immediately upon that; for to God alone, who knows and ſearches the hearts, and who has them in his hands, does it alſo appertain to bow and move them whitherſoever he will. But angels can act upon the rational ſoul, only mediately, by imaginations." *Theolog. Elench. Loc.* VII. *Queſt.* 7.

devil has greater advantage to affect the mind, by working on the imagination. And thus Satan, when he caſts in thoſe horrid ſuggeſtions into the minds of many melancholy perſons, in which they have no hand themſelves, he does it by exciting imaginary ideas, either of ſome dreadful words or ſentences, or other horrid outward ideas. And when he tempts other perſons who are not melancholy, he does it by preſenting to the imagination, in a lively and alluring manner, the objects of their luſts, or by exciting ideas of words, and ſo by them exciting thoughts; or by promoting an imagination of outward actions, events, circumſtances, *&c.* Innumerable are the ways by which the mind might be led on to all kind of evil thoughts, by exciting external ideas in the imagination.

If perſons keep no guard at theſe avenues of Satan, by which he has acceſs to the ſoul, to tempt and delude it, they will be likely to have enough of him. And eſpecially, if inſtead of guarding againſt him, they lay themſelves open to him, and ſeek and invite him, becauſe he appears as an angel of light, and counterfeits the illuminations and graces of the Spirit of God, by inward whiſpers, and immediate ſuggeſtions of facts and events, pleaſant voices, beautiful images, and other impreſſions on the imagination. There are many who are deluded by ſuch things, and are lifted up with them, and ſeek after them, that have a continued courſe of them, and can have them almoſt when they will; and eſpecially when their pride and vain-glory has moſt occaſion for them, to make a ſhew of them before company. It is with them, ſomething as it is with thoſe who are profeſſors of the art of telling where loſt things are to be found, by impreſſions made on their imaginations; they laying themſelves open to the devil, he is always at hand to give them the deſired impreſſion.

Before I finiſh what I would ſay on this head of imaginations, counterfeiting ſpiritual light, and affections ariſing from them, I would renewedly (to prevent miſunderſtanding of what has been ſaid) deſire it may be obſerved, that I am far from determining, that no affections are ſpiritual which are attended with imaginary ideas. Such is the nature of man, that he can ſcarcely think of any thing intenſely, without ſome kind of outward ideas. They ariſe and interpoſe themſelves unavoidably, in the courſe of a man's thoughts; though oftentimes they are very confuſed, and are not what the mind regards. When the mind is much engaged, and the thoughts intenſe, oftentimes the imagination

gination is more ſtrong, and the outward idea more lively, eſpecially in perſons of ſome conſtitutions of body. But there is a great difference between theſe two things, viz. *lively imaginations ariſing from ſtrong affections*, and *ſtrong affections ariſing from lively imaginations*. The former may be, and doubtleſs often is, in caſe of truly gracious affections. The affections do not ariſe from the imagination, nor have any dependence upon it; but on the contrary, the imagination is only the accidental effect, or conſequent of the affection, through the infirmity of human nature. But when the latter is the caſe, as it often is, that the affection ariſes from the imagination, and is built upon it, as its foundation, inſtead of a ſpiritual illumination or diſcovery, then is the affection, however elevated, worthleſs and vain. And this is the drift of what has been now ſaid, of impreſſions on the imagination. Having obſerved this, I proceed to another mark of gracious affections.

V. Truly gracious affections are attended with a reaſonable and ſpiritual conviction of the judgment, of the reality and certainty of divine things.

This ſeems to be implied in the text that was laid as the foundation of this diſcourſe, *Whom having not ſeen, ye love; in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet* BELIEVING, *ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.*

All thoſe who are truly gracious perſons have a ſolid, full, thorough and effectual conviction of the truth of the great things of the goſpel; I mean, that they no longer halt between two opinions; the great doctrines of the goſpel ceaſe to be any longer doubtful things, or matters of opinion, which, though probable, are yet diſputable; but with them, they are points ſettled and determined, as undoubted and indiſputable; ſo that they are not afraid to venture there all upon their truth. Their conviction is an *effectual* conviction: ſo that the great, ſpiritual, myſterious, and inviſible things of the goſpel, have the *influence* of real and certain things upon them; they have the *weight* and *power* of real things in their hearts; and accordingly rule in their affections, and govern them through the courſe of their lives. With reſpect to Chriſt's being the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, and the great things he has revealed concerning himſelf, and his Father, and another world, they have not only a predominating opinion that theſe things are true, and ſo yield their aſſent, as they do in many other matters of doubtful ſpeculation; but they *ſee that it is really ſo*:

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their eyes are opened, ſo that they ſee that really Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of the living God. And as to the things which Chriſt has revealed, of God's eternal purpoſes and deſigns, concerning fallen man, and the glorious and everlaſting things prepared for the ſaints in another world, they ſee that they are ſo indeed: and therefore theſe things are of great weight with them, and have a mighty power upon their hearts, and influence over their practice, in ſome meaſure anſwerable to their infinite importance.

That all true Chriſtians have ſuch a kind of conviction of the truth of the things of the goſpel, is abundantly manifeſt from the holy ſcriptures. I will mention a few places of many; Matth. xvi. 15, 16, 17. "But whom ſay ye that I am? Simon "Peter anſwered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the liv- "ing God. And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art "thou Simon Barjona:—my Father which is in heaven hath "revealed it unto thee." John vi. 68, 69. "Thou haſt the "words of eternal life. And we believe, and are ſure that thou "art that Chriſt, the Son of the living God." John xvii. 6, 7, 8. "I have manifeſted thy name unto the men which thou gaveſt "me out of the world.—Now they have known that all things "whatſoever thou haſt given me, are of thee. For I have given "unto them the words which thou gaveſt me; and they have "received them, and have known ſurely that I came out from "thee, and they have believed that thou didſt ſend me." Acts viii. 37. "If thou believeſt with all thy heart, thou mayſt." 2 Cor. iv. 11, 12, 13, 14. "We which live, are always delivered "unto death for Jeſus ſake.—Death worketh in us.—We hav- "ing the ſpirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, "and therefore have I ſpoken: we alſo believe, and therefore "ſpeak; knowing, that he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall "raiſe up us alſo by Jeſus, and ſhall preſent us with you." Together with verſ. 16. "For which cauſe we faint not." And verſ. 18. "While we look not at the things which are ſeen," &c. And chap. v. 1. "For we know, that if our earthly houſe "of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God. "And verſ. 6, 7, 8. "Therefore we are always confident, "knowing that whilſt we are at home in the body, we are abſent "from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by ſight. We are "confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the bo- "dy, and preſent with the Lord." 2 Tim. i. 12. "For the "which cauſe I alſo ſuffer theſe things; nevertheleſs I am not "aſhamed: for I know whom I have believed, and I am per-

" ſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed
" unto him againſt that day." Heb. iii. 6. " Whoſe houſe are
" we, if we hold faſt the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope
" firm unto the end." Heb. xi. 1. " Now faith is the ſubſtance
" of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen :" to-
" gether with that whole chapter. 1 John iv. 13, 14, 15, 16.
" Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe
" he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have ſeen and do teſti-
" fy, that the Father ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.
" Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the Son of God, God
" dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and
" believed the love that God hath to us." Chap. v. 4, 5. " For
" whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this
" is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.
" Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth
" that Jeſus is the Son of God?"

Therefore truly gracious affections are attended with ſuch a kind of conviction and perſuaſion of the truth of the things of the goſpel, and ſight of their evidence and reality, as theſe and other ſcriptures ſpeak of.

There are many religious affections, which are not attended with ſuch a conviction of the judgment. There are many apprehenſions and ideas which ſome have, that they call divine diſcoveries, which are affecting, but not convincing. Though for a little while, they may ſeem to be more perſuaded of the truth of the things of religion, than they uſed to be, and may yield a forward aſſent, like many of Chriſt's hearers, who believed for a while; yet they have no thorough and effectual conviction; nor is there any great abiding change in them, in this reſpect, that whereas formerly they did not realize the great things of the goſpel, now theſe things, with regard to reality and certainty, appear new to them, and they behold them quite in another view than they uſed to do. There are many perſons who have been exceedingly raiſed with religious affections, and think they have been converted, they do not go about the world any more convinced of the truth of the goſpel, than they uſed to be; or at leaſt, there is no remarkable alteration: they are not men who live under the influence and power of a realizing conviction of the infinite and eternal things which the goſpel reveals; if they were it would be impoſſible for them to live as they do. Becauſe their affections are not attended with a thorough conviction of the mind, they are not at all to be depended on; however great a ſhow and noiſe they make,

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it is like the blaze of tow, or crackling of thorns, or like the forward flouriſhing blade on ſtony ground, that has no root, nor deepneſs of earth to maintain its life.

Some perſons, under high affections, and a confident perſuaſion of their good eſtate, have that, which they very ignorantly call a ſeeing the truth of the word of God, and which is very far from it, after this manner; they have ſome text of ſcripture coming to their minds, in a ſudden and extraordinary manner, immediately declaring unto them (as they ſuppoſe) that their ſins are forgiven, or that God loves them, and will ſave them; and it may be have a chain of ſcriptures coming one after another, to the ſame purpoſe; and they are convinced that it is truth; *i. e.* they are confident that it is certainly ſo, that their ſins are forgiven, and God does love them, &c.—they ſay they know it is ſo; and when the words of ſcripture are ſuggeſted to them, and as they ſuppoſe immediately ſpoken to them by God, in this meaning, they are ready to cry out, *Truth, truth! it is certainly ſo! the word of God is true!* And this they call a ſeeing the truth of the word of God. Whereas the whole of their faith amounts to no more, than only a ſtrong confidence of their own good eſtate, and ſo a confidence that thoſe words are true, which they ſuppoſe tell them they are in a good eſtate: when indeed (as was ſhown before) there is no ſcripture which declares that any perſon is in a good eſtate directly, or any other way than by conſequence. So that this, inſtead of being a real ſight of the truth of the word of God, is a ſight of nothing but a phantom, and is all over a deluſion. Truly to ſee the truth of the word of God, is to ſee the truth of the goſpel; which is the glorious doctrine the word of God contains, concerning God, and Jeſus Chriſt, and the way of ſalvation of by him, and the world of glory that he is entered into, and purchaſed for all them who believe; and not a revelation that ſuch and ſuch particular perſons are true Chriſtians, and ſhall go to heaven. Therefore thoſe affections which ariſe from no other perſuaſion of the truth of the word of God than this, ariſe from deluſion, and not true conviction; and conſequently are themſelves deluſive and vain.

But if the religious affections that perſons have, do indeed ariſe from a ſtrong perſuaſion of the truth of the Chriſtian religion; their affections are not the better, unleſs their perſuaſion be a *reaſonable* perſuaſion or conviction. By a reaſonable conviction, I mean a conviction founded on real evidence, or upon that which is a good reaſon, or juſt ground of conviction. Men may have a ſtrong perſuaſion that the Chriſtian religion is true,

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when their perſuaſion is not at all built on evidence, but altogether on education, and the opinion of others; as many Mahometans are ſtrongly perſuaded of the truth of the Mahometan religion, becauſe their fathers, and neighbors, and nation believe it.—That belief of the truth of the Chriſtian religion, which is built on the very ſame grounds with Mahometans belief of the Mahometan religion, is the ſame ſort of belief. And though the thing believed happens to be better; yet that does not make the belief itſelf to be of a better ſort: for though the thing believed happens to be true, yet the belief of it is not owing to this truth, but to education. So that as the conviction is no better than the Mahometans conviction; ſo the affections that flow from it, are no better, in themſelves, than the religious affections of Mahometans.

But if that belief of Chriſtian doctrines, which perſons affections ariſe from, be not merely from education, but indeed from reaſons and arguments which are offered, it will not from thence neceſſarily follow, that their affections are truly gracious: for in order to that, it is requiſite, not only that the belief which their affections ariſe from, ſhould be a *reaſonable*, but alſo a *ſpiritual* belief or conviction. I ſuppoſe none will doubt but that ſome natural men do yield a kind of aſſent of their judgments to the truth of the Chriſtian religion, from the rational proofs or arguments that are offered to evince it. Judas, without doubt, thought Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, from the things which he ſaw and heard; but yet all along was a devil. So in John ii. 23, 24, 25. we read of *many that believed in Chriſt's name, when they ſaw the miracles that he did*; whom yet Chriſt knew had not that within them, which was to be depended on. So Simon the ſorcerer believed, when he beheld the miracles and ſigns which were done; but yet remained "in the gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity," Acts viii. 13, 23. And if there is ſuch a belief or aſſent of the judgment in ſome natural men, none can doubt but that religious affections may ariſe from that aſſent or belief; as we read of ſome who *believed for a while*, that were greatly affected, and *anon with joy received the word*.

It is evident that there is ſuch a thing as a *ſpiritual* belief or conviction of the truth of the things of the goſpel, or a belief that is peculiar to thoſe who are ſpiritual, or who are regenerated, and have the Spirit of God, in his holy communications, and dwelling in them as a vital principle. So that the conviction they have, does not only differ from that which natural

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men have, in its concomitants, in that it is accompanied with good works; but the belief itself is diverse, the assent and conviction of the judgment is of a kind peculiar to those who are spiritual, and that which natural men are wholly destitute of. This is evident by the scripture, if any thing at all is so; John xvii. 8. "They have believed that thou didst send me." Tit. i. 1. "According to the faith of God's elect, and the acknow-" ledging of the truth which is after godliness." John xvi. 27. "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, " and have believed that I came out from God." 1 John iv. 15. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God " dwelleth in him, and he in God." Chap. v. 1. "Whosoever " believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." vers. 10. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in " himself."

What a *spiritual conviction* of the judgment is, we are naturally led to determine from what has been said already, under the former head of a *spiritual understanding*. The conviction of the judgment arises from the illumination of the understanding: the passing of a right judgment on things, depends on an having a right apprehension or idea of things. And therefore it follows, that a spiritual conviction of the truth of the great things of the gospel, is such a conviction, as arises from having a spiritual view or apprehension of those things in the mind. And this is also evident from the scripture, which often represents, that a saving belief of the reality and divinity of the things proposed and exhibited to us in the gospel, is from the Spirit of God's elightening the mind, to have right apprehensions of the nature of those things, and so as it were unvailing things, or revealing them, and enabling the mind to view them and see them as they are. Luke x. 21, 22. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that ' thou hast HID these things from the wise and prudent, and " hast REVEALED them unto babes: even so, Father, for so ' it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto ' me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but ' the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to ' whom the Son will REVEAL him." John vi. 40. "And ' this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which ' SEETH the Son, and BELIEVETH on him, may have ever- ' lasting life." Where it is plain, that true faith arises from a spiritual sight of Christ. And John xvii. 6, 7, 8. "I have

" MANIFESTED

" MANIFESTED thy name unto the men which thou gaveſt
" me out of the world.—Now they have known that all things
" whatſoever thou haſt given me, are of thee. For I have
" given unto them the words which thou gaveſt me; and they
" have received them, and have known ſurely that I came out
" from thee, and they have believed that thou didſt ſend me."
Where Chriſt's manifeſting God's name to the diſciples, or giving them a true apprehenſion and view of divine things, was that whereby they knew that Chriſt's doctrine was of God, and that Chriſt himſelf was of him, and was ſent by him. Matth. xvi. 16, 17. " Simon Peter ſaid, Thou art Chriſt, the Son of
" the living God. And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him,
" Bleſſed art thou Simon Barjona: for fleſh and blood hath
" not REVEALED it unto thee, but my Father which is in
" heaven." 1 John v. 10. " He that believeth on the Son of
" God, hath the witneſs in himſelf." Gal. i. 14, 15, 16.
" Being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my
" fathers. But when it pleaſed God, who ſeparated me from
" my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to REVEAL
" his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen;
" immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood."

If it be ſo, that that is a ſpiritual conviction of the divinity and reality of the things exhibited in the goſpel, which ariſes from a ſpiritual underſtanding of thoſe things; I have ſhown already what that is, *viz.* a ſenſe and taſte of the divine, ſupreme, and holy excellency and beauty of thoſe things. So that then is the mind ſpiritually convinced of the divinity and truth of the great things of the goſpel, when that conviction ariſes, either directly or remotely, from ſuch a ſenſe or view of their divine excellency and glory as is there exhibited. This clearly follows from things that have been already ſaid; and for this the ſcripture is very plain and expreſs: 2 Cor. iv. 3, to 6. " But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are
" loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds
" of them that BELIEVE not, leſt the light of the GLORIOUS
" GOSPEL of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine
" unto them. For we preach not ourſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus
" the Lord; and ourſelves your ſervants for Jeſus' ſake. For
" God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs,
" hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the LIGHT OF THE
" KNOWLEGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD, in the face of
" Jeſus Chriſt." Together with the laſt verſe of the foregoing chapter,

chapter, which introduces this, " But we all with open face, " beholding as in a glaſs the GLORY OF THE LORD, are " changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as " by the Spirit of the Lord." Nothing can be more evident, than that a ſaving belief of the goſpel is here ſpoken of, by the apoſtle, as ariſing from the mind's being enlightened to behold the divine glory of the things it exhibits.

This view or ſenſe of the divine glory, and unparallelled beauty of the things exhibited to us in the goſpel, has a tendency to convince the mind of their divinity, two ways; *directly*, and more *indirectly*, and *remotely*. 1. A view of this divine glory *directly*, convinces the mind of the divinity of theſe things, as this glory is in itſelf a direct, clear, and all-conquering evidence of it; eſpecially when clearly diſcovered, or when this ſupernatural ſenſe is given in a good degree.

He that has his judgment thus *directly* convinced and aſſured of the divinity of the things of the goſpel, by a clear view of their divine glory, has a *reaſonable* conviction; his belief and aſſurance is altogether agreeable to reaſon; becauſe the divine glory and beauty of divine things is in itſelf, real evidence of their divinity, and the moſt direct and ſtrong evidence. He that truly ſees the divine, tranſcendent, ſupreme glory of thoſe things which are divine, does as it were know their divinity intuitively; he not only argues that they are divine, but he ſees that they are divine; he ſees that in them wherein divinity chiefly conſiſts; for in this glory, which is ſo vaſtly and inexpreſſibly diſtinguiſhed from the glory of artificial things, and all other glory, does mainly conſiſt the true notion of divinity. God is God, and diſtinguiſhed from all other beings, and exalted above them, chiefly by his divine beauty, which is infinitely diverſe from all other beauty. They therefore that ſee the ſtamp of this glory in divine things, they ſee divinity in them, they ſee God in them, and ſo ſee them to be divine; becauſe they ſee that in them wherein the trueſt idea of divinity does conſiſt. Thus a ſoul may have a kind of intuitive knowlege of the divinity of the things exhibited in the goſpel; not that he judges the doctrines of the goſpel to be from God, without any argument or deduction at all; but it is without any long chain of arguments; the argument is but one, and the evidence direct; the mind aſcends to the truth of the goſpel but by one ſtep, and that is its divine glory.

It would be very ſtrange, if any profeſſing Chriſtian ſhould

deny

deny it to be poſſible, that there ſhould be an excellency in divine things, which is ſo tranſcendent, and exceedingly different from what is in other things, that if it were ſeen, would evidently diſtinguiſh them. We cannot rationally doubt, but that things that are *divine*, that appertain to the ſupreme Being, are vaſtly different from things that are *human*: that there is a God-like, high, and glorious excellency in them, that does ſo diſtinguiſh them from the things which are of men, that the difference is ineffable; and therefore ſuch, as, if ſeen, will have a moſt convincing, ſatisfying influence upon any one, that they are what they are, *viz.* divine. Doubtleſs there is that glory and excellency in the divine Being, by which he is ſo infinitely diſtinguiſhed from all other beings, that if it were ſeen, he might be known by it. It would therefore be very unreaſonable to deny, that it is poſſible for God to give manifeſtations of this diſtinguiſhing excellency, in things by which he is pleaſed to make himſelf known; and that this diſtinguiſhing excellency may be clearly ſeen in them. There are *natural* excellencies that are very evidently diſtinguiſhing of the ſubjects or authors, to any one who beholds them. How vaſtly is the ſpeech of an underſtanding man different from that of a little child! And how greatly diſtinguiſhed is the ſpeech of ſome men of great genius, as Homer, Cicero, Milton, Locke, Addiſon, and others, from that of many other underſtanding men! There are no limits to be ſet to the degrees of manifeſtation of mental excellency, that there may be in ſpeech. But the appearances of the *natural* perfections of God, in the manifeſtations he makes of himſelf, may doubtleſs be unſpeakably more evidently diſtinguiſhing, than the appearances of thoſe excellencies of worms of the duſt, in which they differ one from another. He that is well acquainted with mankind, and their works, by viewing the ſun, may know it is no human work. And it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that when Chriſt comes at the end of the world, in the glory of his Father, it will be with ſuch ineffable appearances of divinity, as will leave no doubt to the inhabitants of the world, even the moſt obſtinate infidels that he who appears is a divine perſon. But above all, do the manifeſtations of the *moral* and *ſpiritual* glory of the divine Being, (which is the proper beauty of the divinity,) bring their own evidence, and tend to aſſure the heart. Thus the diſciples were aſſured that Jeſus was the Son of God, for "they beheld "his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father "full

"full of grace and truth." John i. 14. When Chriſt appeared in the glory of his transfiguration to his diſciples, with that outward glory to their bodily eyes, which was a ſweet and admirable ſymbol and ſemblance of his ſpiritual glory, together with his ſpiritual glory itſelf, manifeſted to their minds; the manifeſtation of glory was ſuch, as did perfectly, and with good reaſon, aſſure them of his divinity; as appears by what one of them, *viz*, the apoſtle Peter, ſays concerning it, 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18. "For we have not followed cunningly deviſed fa-
" bles, when we made known unto you the power and coming
" of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but were eye-witneſſes of his ma-
" jeſty: for he received from God the Father, honour and
" glory, when there came ſuch a voice to him from the excel-
" lent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well
" pleaſed. And this voice which came from heaven we heard,
" when we were with him in the holy mount." The apoſtle calls that mount, *the holy mount*, becauſe the manifeſtations of Chriſt which were there made to their minds, and which their minds were eſpecially impreſſed and raviſhed with, was the glory of his *holineſs*, or the beauty of his *moral excellency*; or, as another of theſe diſciples, who ſaw it, expreſſes it, *His glory, as full of grace and truth.*

Now this diſtinguiſhing glory of the divine Being has its brighteſt appearance and manifeſtation, in the things propoſed and exhibited to us in the goſpel, the doctrines there taught, the word there ſpoken, and the divine counſels, acts and works there revealed. Theſe things have the cleareſt, moſt admirable, and diſtinguiſhing repreſentations and exhibitions of the glory of God's moral perfections, that ever were made to the world. And if there be ſuch a diſtinguiſhing, evidential manifeſtation of divine glory in the goſpel, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that there may be ſuch a thing as ſeeing it: what ſhould hinder but that it may be ſeen? It is no argument that it cannot be ſeen, that ſome do not ſee it; though they may be diſcerning men in temporal matters. If there be ſuch ineffable, diſtinguiſhing, evidential excellencies in the goſpel, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that they are ſuch as are not to be diſcerned, but by the ſpecial influence and enlightenings of the Spirit of God. There is need of uncommon force of mind to diſcern the diſtinguiſhing excellencies of the works of authors of great genius: thoſe things in Milton, which to mean judges appear taſteleſs and imperfections, are his inimitable excellencies in the eyes of thoſe who

are of greater diſcerning, and better taſte. And if there be a book, which God is the author of, it is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the diſtinguiſhing glories of his word are of ſuch a kind, as that the ſin and corruption of mens hearts, which above all things alienates men from the Deity, and makes the heart dull and ſtupid to any ſenſe or taſte of thoſe things wherein the moral glory of the divine perfections conſiſts; I ſay, it is but reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that this would blind men from diſcerning the beauties of ſuch a book; and that therefore they will not ſee them, but as God is pleaſed to enlighten them, and reſtore an holy taſte, to diſcern and reliſh divine beauties.

This ſenſe of the ſpiritual excellency and beauty of divine things, does alſo tend *directly* to convince the mind of the truth of the goſpel, as there are very many of the moſt important things declared in the goſpel, that are hid from the eyes of natural men, the truth of which does in effect conſiſt in this excellency, or does ſo immediately depend upon it and reſult from it, that in this excellency's being ſeen, the truth of thoſe things is ſeen. As ſoon as ever the eyes are opened to behold the holy beauty and amiableneſs that is in divine things, a multitude of moſt important doctrines of the goſpel, that depend upon it, (which all appear ſtrange and dark to natural men,) are at once ſeen to be true. As for inſtance, hereby appears the truth of what the word of God declares concerning the exceeding evil of ſin; for the ſame eye that diſcerns the tranſcendent beauty of holineſs, neceſſarily therein ſees the exceeding odiouſneſs of ſin: the ſame taſte which reliſhes the ſweetneſs of true moral good, taſtes the bitterneſs of moral evil. And by this means a man ſees his own ſinfulneſs and loathſomeneſs; for he has now a ſenſe to diſcern objects of this nature; and ſo ſees the truth of what the word of God declares concerning the exceeding ſinfulneſs of mankind, which before he did not ſee. He now ſees the dreadful pollution of his heart, and the deſperate depravity of his nature, in a new manner; for his ſoul has now a ſenſe given it to feel the pain of ſuch a diſeaſe: and this ſhows him the truth of what the ſcripture reveals concerning the corruption of man's nature, his original ſin, and the ruinous undone condition man is in, and his need of a Saviour, his need of the mighty power of God to renew his heart, and change his nature. Men by ſeeing the true excellency of holineſs, do ſee the glory of all thoſe things,

things, which both reaſon and ſcripture ſhew to be in the divine Being; for it has been ſhown, that the glory of them depend on this: and hereby they ſee the truth of all that the ſcripture declares concerning God's glorious excellency and majeſty, his being the fountain of all good, the only happineſs of the creature, *&c.* And this again ſhews the mind the truth of what the ſcripture teaches concerning the evil of ſin againſt ſo glorious a God; and alſo the truth of what it teaches concerning ſin's juſt deſert of that dreadful puniſhment which it reveals; and alſo concerning the impoſſibility of our offering any ſatisfaction, or ſufficient atonement for that which is ſo infinitely evil and heinous. And this again ſhews the truth of what the ſcripture reveals concerning the neceſſity of a Saviour, to offer an atonement of infinite value for ſin. And this ſenſe of ſpiritual beauty that has been ſpoken of, enables the ſoul to ſee the glory of thoſe things which the goſpel reveals concerning the perſon of Chriſt; and ſo enables to ſee the exceeding beauty and dignity of his perſon, appearing in what the goſpel exhibits of his word, works, acts, and life: and this apprehenſion of the ſuperlative dignity of his perſon, ſhews the truth of what the goſpel declares concerning the value of his blood and righteouſneſs, and ſo the infinite excellency of that offering he has made to God for us, and ſo its ſufficiency to atone for our ſins, and recommend us to God. And thus the ſpirit of God diſcovers the way of ſalvation by Chriſt; thus the ſoul ſees the fitneſs and ſuitableneſs of this way of ſalvation, the admirable wiſdom of the contrivance, and the perfect anſwerableneſs of the proviſion that the goſpel exhibits, (as made for us,) to our neceſſities. A ſenſe of true divine beauty being given to the ſoul, the ſoul diſcerns the beauty of every part of the goſpel-ſcheme. This alſo ſhews the ſoul the truth of what the word of God declares concerning man's chief happineſs, as conſiſting in holy exerciſes and enjoyments. This ſhews the truth of what the goſpel declares concerning the unſpeakable glory of the heavenly ſtate. And what the prophecies of the Old Teſtament, and the writings of the apoſtles declare concerning the glory of the Meſſiah's kingdom, is now all plain; and alſo what the ſcripture teaches concerning the reaſons and grounds of our duty. The truth of all theſe things revealed in the ſcripture, and many more that might be mentioned, appear to the ſoul, only by imparting that ſpiritual taſte of divine beauty, which has been ſpoken of; they being hidden things to the ſoul before.

And

And beſides all this, the truth of all thoſe things which the ſcripture ſays about experimental religion, is hereby known; for they are now experienced. And this convinces the ſoul, that one who knew the heart of man, better than we know our own hearts, and perfectly knew the nature of virtue and holineſs, was the author of the ſcriptures. And the opening to view, with ſuch clearneſs, ſuch a world of wonderful and glorious truth in the goſpel, that before was unknown, being quite above the view of a natural eye, but now appearing ſo clear and bright, has a powerful and invincible influence on the ſoul, to perſuade of the divinity of the goſpel.

Unleſs men may come to a reaſonable ſolid perſuaſion and conviction of the truth of the goſpel, by the internal evidences of it, in the way that has been ſpoken, *viz.* by a ſight of its glory; it is impoſſible that thoſe who are illiterate, and unacquainted with hiſtory, ſhould have any thorough and effectual conviction of it at all. They may without this, ſee a great deal of probability of it; it may be reaſonable for them to give much credit to what learned men, and hiſtorians tell them; and they may tell them ſo much, that it may look very probable and rational to them, that the Chriſtian religion is true; and ſo much that they would be very unreaſonable not to entertain this opinion. But to have a conviction, ſo clear, and evident, and aſſuring, as to be ſufficient to induce them, with boldneſs to ſell all, confidently and fearleſsly to run the venture of the loſs of all things, and of enduring the moſt exquiſite and long continued torments, and to trample the world under foot, and count all things but dung for Chriſt; the evidence they can have from hiſtory, cannot be ſufficient. It is impoſſible that men, who have not ſomething of a general view of the hiſtorical world, or the ſeries of hiſtory from age to age, ſhould come at the force of arguments for the truth of Chriſtianity, drawn from hiſtory, to that degree, as effectually to induce them to venture their all upon it. After all that learned men have ſaid to them, there will remain innumerable doubts on their minds; they will be ready, when pinched with ſome great trial of their faith, to ſay, "How do I know this, or that? "How do I know when theſe hiſtories were written? Learn-
"ed men tell me theſe hiſtories were ſo and ſo atteſted in the
"day of them; but how do I know that there were ſuch atteſ-
"tations then? They tell me there is equal reaſon to believe
"theſe facts, as any whatſoever that are related at ſuch a diſ-
"tance;

" tance ; but how do I know that other facts which are relat-
" ed of thoſe ages, ever were?" Thoſe who have not ſome-
thing of a general view of the ſeries of hiſtorical events, and
of the ſtate of mankind from age to age, cannot ſee the clear
evidence from hiſtory, of the truth of facts, in diſtant ages ;
but there will endleſs doubts and ſcruples remain.

But the goſpel was not given only for learned men. There
are at leaſt nineteen in twenty, if not ninety-nine in an hun-
dred, of thoſe for whom the ſcriptures were written, that are
not capable of any certain or effectual conviction of the divine
authority of the ſcriptures, by ſuch arguments as learned men
make uſe of. If men who have been brought up in Heathen-
iſm, muſt wait for a clear and certain conviction of the truth
of Chriſtianity, until they have learning and acquaintance with
the hiſtories of politer nations, enough to ſee clearly the force
of ſuch kind of arguments ; it will make the evidence of the
goſpel, to them, immenſely cumberſome, and will render the
propagation of the goſpel among them, infinitely difficult.
Miſerable is the condition of the Houſſatunnuck Indians, and
others, who have lately manifeſted a deſire to be inſtructed in
Chriſtianity, if they can come at no evidence of the truth of
Chriſtianity, ſufficient to induce them to ſell all for Chriſt, in
any other way but this.

It is unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that God has provided for his
people, no more than probable evidences of the truth of the
goſpel. He has with great care, abundantly provided, and
given them, the moſt convincing, aſſuring, ſatisfying and ma-
nifold evidence of his faithfulneſs in the covenant of grace; and
as David ſays, *made a covenant, ordered in all things and ſure.*
Therefore it is rational to ſuppoſe, that at the ſame time, he
would not fail of ordering the matter ſo, that there ſhould not
be wanting, as great, and clear evidence, *that this is his cove-*
nant, and that theſe promiſes are his promiſes; or which is the
ſame thing, that the Chriſtian religion is true, and that the
goſpel is his word. Otherwiſe in vain are thoſe great aſſurances
he has given of his faithfulneſs in his covenant, by confirming
it with his oath, and ſo variouſly eſtabliſhing it by ſeals and
pledges. For the evidence that it is his covenant, is properly
the foundation on which all the force and effect of thoſe other
aſſurances do ſtand. We may therefore undoubtedly ſuppoſe
and conclude, that there is ſome ſort of evidence which God
has given, that this covenant, and theſe promiſes are his, be-

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yond all mere probability; that there are ſome grounds of aſ
ſurance of it held forth, which, if we are not blind to them
tend to give an higher perſuaſion, than any arguing from hiſ
tory, human tradition, &c. which the illiterate and unac
quainted with hiſtory, are capable of: yea, that which is gooc
ground of the higheſt and moſt perfect aſſurance, that mankinc
have in any caſe whatſoever; agreeable to thoſe high expreſſion
which the apoſtle uſes, Heb. x. 22. "Let us draw near in FULI
"ASSURANCE OF FAITH." And Col. ii. 2. "That thei
"hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, anc
"unto ALL RICHES OF THE FULL ASSURANCE OF UN
"DERSTANDING, to the acknowledgment of the myſtery
"of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt." It is reaſon
able to ſuppoſe, that God would give the greateſt evidence
of thoſe things which are greateſt, and the truth of which
is of greateſt importance to us: and that we therefore, if we are
wiſe, and act rationally, ſhall have the greateſt deſire of having
full, undoubting, and perfect aſſurance of. But it is certain
that ſuch an aſſurance is not to be attained, by the greater part
of them who live under the goſpel, by arguments fetched from
ancient traditions, hiſtories, and monuments.

And if we come to fact and experience, there is not the leaſt
reaſon to ſuppoſe, that one in an hundred of thoſe who have
been ſincere Chriſtians, and have had a heart to ſell all for
Chriſt, have come by their conviction of the truth of the goſ-
pel, this way. If we read over the hiſtories of the many thou-
ſands that died martyrs for Chriſt, ſince the beginning of the
reformation, and have chearfully undergone extreme tortures,
in a confidence of the truth of the goſpel, and conſidered their
circumſtances and advantages; how few of them were there,
that we can reaſonably ſuppoſe, ever came by their aſſured per-
ſuaſion, this way; or indeed for whom it was poſſible, reaſon-
ably to receive ſo full and ſtrong an aſſurance, from ſuch argu-
ments! Many of them were weak women and children, and
the greater part of them illiterate perſons, many of whom had
been brought up in popiſh ignorance and darkneſs, and were
but newly come out of it, and lived and died in times, where-
in thoſe arguments for the truth of Chriſtianity from antiquity
and hiſtory, had been but very imperfectly handled. And in-
deed, it is but very lately that theſe arguments have been ſet
in a clear and convincing light, even by learned men them-
ſelves: and ſince it has been done, there never were fewer

thorough

thorough believers, among thoſe who have been educated in the true religion; infidelity never prevailed ſo much, in any age, as in this, wherein theſe arguments are handled to the greateſt advantage.

The true martyrs of Jeſus Chriſt, are not thoſe who have only been ſtrong in opinion that the goſpel of Chriſt is true, but *thoſe that have ſeen the truth of it:* as the very name of martyrs or witneſſes (by which they are called in ſcripture) implies. Thoſe are very improperly called witneſſes of the truth of any thing, who only declare they are very much of opinion that ſuch a thing is true. Thoſe only are proper witneſſes, who can, and do teſtify that they have ſeen the truth of the thing they aſſert; John iii. 11. "We ſpeak that we do know, " and *teſtify* that we have ſeen." John i. 34. "And I *ſaw*, " and *bare record*, that this is the Son of God. 1 John iv. 14. " And we have *ſeen*, and do *teſtify*, that the Father ſent the Son " to be the Saviour of the world." Acts xxii. 14, 15. " The " God of our fathers hath choſen thee, that thou ſhouldſt *know* " his will, and *ſee* that juſt One, and ſhouldſt *hear* the voice of " his mouth: for thou ſhalt be his *witneſs* unto all men, of " what thou haſt *ſeen* and *heard*." But the true martyrs of Jeſus Chriſt are called his witneſſes: and all the ſaints, who by their holy practice under great trials, declare that faith, *which is the* SUBSTANCE *of things hoped for, and the* EVIDENCE *of things not ſeen*, are called witneſſes, Heb. xi. 1. and xii. 1. becauſe by their profeſſion and practice, they declare their aſſurance of the truth and divinity of the goſpel having had the eyes of their minds enlightened to ſee divinity in the goſpel, or to behold that unparallelled, ineffable, excellent, and truly divine glory ſhining in it, which is altogether diſtinguiſhing, evidential, and convincing: ſo that they may truly be ſaid to have ſeen God in it, and to have ſeen that it is indeed divine; and ſo can ſpeak in the ſtyle of witneſſes: and not only ſay, that *they think* the goſpel is divine, but ſay, that *it is divine*, giving it in as their teſtimony, becauſe they have ſeen it to be ſo. Doubtleſs Peter, James, and John, after they had ſeen that excellent glory of Chriſt in the mount, would have been ready, when they came down, to ſpeak in the language of witneſſes, and to ſay poſitively that *Jeſus is the Son of God*: as Peter ſays, *they were eye-witneſſes*, 2 Pet. i. 16. And ſo all nations will be ready poſitively to ſay this, when they ſhall behold his glory at the day of judgment; though what will

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be univerſally ſeen, will be only his natural glory, and not his moral and ſpiritual glory, which is much more diſtinguiſhing. But yet, it muſt be noted, that among thoſe who have a ſpiritual ſight of the divine glory of the goſpel, there is a great variety of degrees of ſtrength of faith, as there is a vaſt variety of the degrees of clearneſs of views of this glory: but there is no true and ſaving faith, or ſpiritual conviction of the judgment, of the truth of the goſpel, that has nothing in it, of this manifeſtation of its internal evidence, in ſome degree. The goſpel of the bleſſed God does not go abroad a-begging for its evidence, ſo much as ſome think; it has its higheſt and moſt proper evidence in itſelf. Though great uſe may be made of external arguments, they are not to be neglected, but highly prized and valued; for they may be greatly ſerviceable to awaken unbelievers, and bring them to ſerious conſideration, and to confirm the faith of true ſaints: yea, they may be in ſome reſpects ſubſervient *to the begetting* of a ſaving faith in men. Though what was ſaid before remains true, that there is no ſpiritual conviction of the judgment, but what ariſes from an apprehenſion of the ſpiritual beauty and glory of divine things: for, as has been obſerved, this apprehenſion or view has a tendency to convince the mind of the truth of the goſpel, two ways; either directly or indirectly. Having therefore already obſerved how it does this directly, I proceed now,

2. To obſerve how a view of this divine glory does convince the mind of the truth of Chriſtianity, more indirectly.

Firſt, It doth ſo, as the prejudices of the heart againſt the truth of divine things are hereby removed, ſo that the mind thereby lies open to the force of the reaſons which are offered. The mind of man is naturally full of enmity againſt the doctrines of the goſpel; which is a diſadvantage to thoſe arguments that prove their truth, and cauſes them to loſe their force upon the mind: but when a perſon has diſcovered to him the divine excellency of Chriſtian doctrines, this deſtroys that enmity, and removes the prejudices, and ſanctifies the reaſon, and cauſes it to be open and free. Hence is a vaſt difference, as to the force that arguments have to convince the mind. Hence was the very different effect, which Chriſt's miracles had to convince the diſciples, from what they had to convince the Scribes and Phariſees: not that they had a ſtronger reaſon,

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or had their reaſon more improved ; but their reaſon was ſanctified, and thoſe blinding prejudices, which the Scribes and Phariſees were under, were removed, by the ſenſe they had of the excellency of Chriſt and his doctrine.

Secondly, It not only removes the hindrances of reaſon, but poſitively helps reaſon. It makes even the ſpeculative notions more lively. It aſſiſts and engages the attention of the mind to that kind of objects ; which cauſes it to have a clearer view of them, and more clearly to ſee their mutual relations. The ideas themſelves, which otherwiſe are dim and obſcure, by this means have a light caſt upon them, and are impreſſed with greater ſtrength, ſo that the mind can better judge of them ; as he that beholds the objects on the face of the earth, when the light of the ſun is caſt upon them, is under greater advantage to diſcern them, in their true forms, and mutual relations, and to ſee the evidences of divine wiſdom and ſkill in their contrivance, than he that ſees them in a dim ſtar-light, or twilight.

What has been ſaid, may ſerve in ſome meaſure to ſhew the nature of a ſpiritual conviction of the judgment of the truth and reality of divine things ; and ſo to diſtinguiſh truly gracious affections from others ; for gracious affections are evermore attended with ſuch a conviction of the judgment.

But before I diſmiſs this head, it will be needful to obſerve the ways whereby ſome are deceived, with reſpect to this matter ; and take notice of ſeveral things, that are ſometimes taken for a ſpiritual and ſaving belief of the truth of the things of religion, which are indeed very diverſe from it.

1. There is a degree of conviction of the truth of the great things of religion, that ariſes from the common enlightenings of the Spirit of God. That more lively and ſenſible apprehenſion of the things of religion, with reſpect to what is *natural* in them, ſuch as natural men have who are under awakenings and common illuminations, will give ſome degree of conviction of the truth of divine things, beyond what they had before they were thus enlightened. For hereby they ſee the manifeſtations there are, in the revelation made in the holy ſcriptures, and things exhibited in that revelation, of the natural perfections of God ; ſuch as his greatneſs, power, and awful majeſty ; which tends to convince the mind, that this is the word of a great and terrible God. From the tokens there are of God's

greatneſs and majeſty in his word and works, which they have a great ſenſe of, from the common influence of the Spirit of God, they may have a much greater conviction that theſe are indeed the word and works of a very great inviſible Being. And the lively apprehenſion of the greatneſs of God, which natural men may have, tends to make them ſenſible of the great guilt, which ſin againſt ſuch a God brings, and the dreadfulneſs of his wrath for ſin. And this tends to cauſe them more eaſily and fully to believe the revelation the ſcripture makes of another world, and of the extreme miſery it threatens, there to be inflicted on ſinners. And ſo from that ſenſe of the great natural good there is in the things of religion, which is ſometimes given in common illuminations, men may be the more induced to believe the truth of religion. Theſe things perſons may have, and yet have no ſenſe of the beauty and amiableneſs of the moral and holy excellency that is in the things of religion; and therefore no ſpiritual conviction of their truth. But yet ſuch convictions are ſometimes miſtaken for ſaving convictions, and the affections flowing from them, for ſaving affections.

2. The extraordinary impreſſions which are made on the imaginations of ſome perſons, in the viſions, and immediate ſtrong impulſes and ſuggeſtions that they have, as though they ſaw ſights, and had words ſpoken to them, may, and often do beget a ſtrong perſuaſion of the truth of inviſible things. Though the general tendency of ſuch things, in their final iſſue, is to draw men off from the word of God, and to cauſe them to reject the goſpel, and to eſtabliſh unbelief and Atheiſm; yet for the preſent, they may, and often do beget a confident perſuaſion of the truth of ſome things that are revealed in the ſcriptures; however their confidence is founded in deluſion, and ſo nothing worth. As for inſtance, if a perſon has by ſome inviſible agent, immediately and ſtrongly impreſſed on his imagination, the appearance of a bright light, and glorious form of a perſon ſeated on a throne, with great external majeſty and beauty, uttering ſome remarkable words, with great force and energy; the perſon who is the ſubject of ſuch an operation, may be from hence confident, that there are inviſible agents, ſpiritual beings, from what he has experienced, knowing that he had no hand himſelf in this extraordinary effect, which he has experienced: and he may alſo be confident, that this is Chriſt

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whom he ſaw and heard ſpeaking: and this may make him confident that there is a Chriſt, and that Chriſt reigns on a throne in heaven, as he ſaw him; and may be confident that the words which he heard him ſpeak are true, *&c.*—in the ſame manner, as the lying miracles of the Papiſts, may for the preſent, beget in the minds of the ignorant deluded people, a ſtrong perſuaſion of the truth of many things declared in the New Teſtament. Thus when the images of Chriſt, in Popiſh churches, are on ſome extraordinary occaſions, made by prieſt-craft to appear to the people as if they wept, and ſhed freſh blood, and moved, and uttered ſuch and ſuch words; the people may be verily perſuaded that it is a miracle wrought by Chriſt himſelf; and from thence may be confident there is a Chriſt, and that what they are told of his death and ſufferings, and reſurrection, and aſcenſion, and preſent government of the world is true; for they may look upon this miracle, as a certain evidence of all theſe things, and a kind of occular demonſtration of them. This may be the influence of theſe lying wonders for the preſent; though the general tendency of them is not to convince that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, but finally to promote Atheiſm, Even the intercourſe which Satan has with witches, and their often experiencing his immediate power, has a tendency to convince them of the truth of ſome of the doctrines of religion; as particularly the reality of an inviſible world or world of ſpirits, contrary to the doctrine of the Sadduces. The general tendency of Satan's influences is deluſion: but yet he may mix ſome truth with his lies, that his lies may not be ſo eaſily diſcovered.

There are multitudes that are deluded with a counterfeit faith, from impreſſions on their imagination, in the manner which has been now ſpoken of. They ſay they know that there is a God, for they have ſeen him; they know that Chriſt is the Son of God, for they have ſeen him in his glory; they know that Chriſt died for ſinners, for they have ſeen him hanging on the croſs, and his blood running from his wounds; they know there is a heaven and a hell, for they have ſeen the miſery of the damned ſouls in hell, and the glory of ſaints and angels in heaven, (meaning ſome external repreſentations, ſtrongly impreſſed on their imagination;) they know that the ſcriptures are the word of God, and that ſuch and ſuch promiſes in particular are his word, for they have heard him ſpeak them to them, they came to their minds ſuddenly and immediately from God, without their having any hand in it.

3. Perſons may ſeem to have their belief of the truth of the things of religion greatly increaſed, when the foundation of it

is only a perſuaſion they have received, of their intereſt in them. They firſt, by ſome means or other, take up a confidence, that if there be a Chriſt in heaven, they are theirs; and this prejudices them more in favor of the truth of them. When they hear of the great and glorious things of religion, it is with this notion, that all theſe things belong to them; and hence eaſily become confident that they are true; they look upon it to be greatly for their intereſt that they ſhould be true. It is very obvious what a ſtrong influence mens intereſt and inclinations have on their judgments. While a natural man thinks, that if there be a heaven and hell; the latter, and not the former, belongs to him; then he will be hardly perſuaded that there is a heaven or hell: but when he comes to be perſuaded, that hell belongs only to other folks, and not to him; then he can eaſily allow the reality of hell, and cry out of others ſenſeleſſneſs and ſottiſhneſs in neglecting means of eſcape from it: and being confident that he is a child of God, and that God has promiſed heaven to him, he may ſeem ſtrong in the faith of its reality, and may have a great zeal againſt that infidelity which denies it.

But I proceed to another diſtinguiſhing ſign of gracious affections.

VI. Gracious affections are attended with *evangelical humiliation*.

Evangelical humiliation is a ſenſe that a Chriſtian has of his own utter inſufficiency, deſpicableneſs, and odiouſneſs, with an anſwerable frame of heart.

There is a diſtinction to be made between a *legal* and *evangelical* humiliation. The former is what men may be the ſubjects of, while they are yet in a ſtate of nature, and have no gracious affection; the latter is peculiar to true ſaints: the former is from the common influence of the Spirit of God, aſſiſting natural principles, and eſpecially natural conſcience; the latter is from the ſpecial influences of the Spirit of God, implanting and exerciſing ſupernatural and divine principles: the former is from the mind's being aſſiſted to a greater ſenſe of the things of religion, as to their natural properties and qualities, and particularly of the natural perfections of God, ſuch as his greatneſs, terrible majeſty, *&c.* which were manifeſted to the congregation of Iſrael, in giving the law at mount Sinai; the latter is from a ſenſe of the tranſcendent beauty of divine things in their moral qualities: in the former, a ſenſe of the awful

greatneſs,

greatneſs, and natural perfections of God, and of the ſtrictneſs of his law, convinces men that they are exceeding ſinful, and guilty, and expoſed to the wrath of God, as it will wicked men and devils at the day of judgment; but they do not ſee their own *odiouſneſs* on the account of ſin; they do not ſee the hateful nature of ſin; a ſenſe of this is given in *evangelical humiliation*, by a diſcovery of the beauty of God's holineſs and moral perfection. In a *legal humiliation*, men are made ſenſible that they are little and nothing before the great and terrible God, and that they are undone, and wholly inſufficient to help themſelves; as wicked men will be at the day of judgment: but they have not *an anſwerable frame of heart*, conſiſting in a diſpoſition to abaſe themſelves, and exalt God alone; this diſpoſition is given only in evangelical humiliation, by overcoming the heart, and changing its inclination, by a diſcovery of God's holy beauty: in a legal humiliation, the conſcience is convinced; as the conſciences of all will be moſt perfectly at the day of judgment; but becauſe there is no ſpiritual underſtanding, the will is not bowed, nor the inclination altered; this is done only in evangelical humiliation. In legal humiliation, men are brought to deſpair of helping themſelves; in evangelical, they are brought voluntarily to deny and renounce themſelves: in the former, they are ſubdued and forced to the ground; in the latter, they are brought ſweetly to yield, and freely and with delight to proſtrate themſelves at the feet of God.

Legal humiliation has in it no ſpiritual good, nothing of the nature of true virtue; whereas evangelical humiliation is that wherein the excellent beauty of Chriſtian grace does very much conſiſt. Legal humiliation is uſeful, as a means in order to evangelical; as a common knowlege of the things of religion is a means requiſite in order to ſpiritual knowlege. Men may be legally humbled and have no *humility*; as the wicked at the day of judgment will be thoroughly convinced that they have no righteouſneſs, but are altogether ſinful, and exceeding guilty, and juſtly expoſed to eternal damnation, and be fully ſenſible of their own helpleſſneſs, without the leaſt mortification of the pride of their hearts: but the eſſence of evangelical humiliation conſiſts in ſuch *humility*, as becomes a creature, in itſelf exceeding ſinful, under a diſpenſation of grace; conſiſting in a mean eſteem of himſelf, as in himſelf nothing, and altogether contemptible and odious; attended with a mortification of a diſpoſition to exalt himſelf, and a free renunciation of his own glory.

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This is a great and moſt eſſential thing in true religion. The whole frame of the goſpel, and every thing appertaining to the new covenant, and all God's diſpenſations towards fallen man, are calculated to bring to paſs this effect in the hearts of men. They that are deſtitute of this, have no true religion, whatever profeſſion they may make, and how high ſoever their religious affections may be; Hab. ii. 4. "Behold, his ſoul which "is lifted up, is not upright in him; but the juſt ſhall live by "his faith;" *i. e.* he ſhall live by his faith on God's righteouſneſs and grace, and not his own goodneſs and excellency. God has abundantly manifeſted in his word, that this is what he has a peculiar reſpect to in his ſaints, and that nothing is acceptable to him without it; Pſal. xxxiv. 18. "The Lord is nigh "unto them that are of a broken heart, and ſaveth ſuch as be "of a contrite ſpirit." Pſal. li. 17. "The ſacrifices of God "are a broken ſpirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, "thou wilt not deſpiſe." Pſal. cxxxviii. 6. "Though the Lord "be high, yet hath he reſpect unto the lowly." Prov. iii. 34. "He giveth grace unto the lowly." Iſ. lvii. 15. "Thus ſaith "the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whoſe name "is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him alſo "that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of "the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Iſ. lxvi. 1, 2. "Thus ſaith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, "and the earth is my footſtool:—but to this man will I look, "even to him that is poor and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word." Micah vi. 8. "He hath ſhewed thee, O "man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God re"quire of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to "walk humbly with thy God?" Matth. v. 3. "Bleſſed are "the poor in ſpirit: for theirs is the kingdom of God." Matth. xviii. 3, 4. "Verily I ſay unto you, Except ye be converted, "and become as little children, ye ſhall not enter into the "kingdom of heaven. Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble "himſelf as this little child, the ſame is greateſt in the king"dom of heaven." Mark x. 15. "Verily I ſay unto you, "Whoſoever ſhall not receive the kingdom of God as a little "child, he ſhall not enter therein." The centurion, that we have an account of, Luke vii. acknowledged that *he was not worthy that Chriſt ſhould enter under his roof*, and that *he was not worthy to come to him*. See the manner of the woman's coming to Chriſt, that was a ſinner, Luke vii. 37, *&c.* "And

"behold,

" behold, a woman in the city, which was a ſinner, when " ſhe knew that Jeſus ſat at meat in the Phariſee's houſe, " brought an alabaſter-box of ointment, and ſtood at his " feet behind him weeping, and began to waſh his feet " with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head." She did not think the hair of her head, which is the natural crown and glory of a woman, (1 Cor. xi. 15.) too good to wipe the feet of Chriſt withal. Jeſus moſt graciouſly accepted her, and ſays to her, *Thy faith hath ſaved thee, go in peace.* The woman of Canaan ſubmitted to Chriſt, in his ſaying, *It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to caſt it to dogs*, and did as it were own that ſhe was worthy to be called a dog; whereupon Chriſt ſays unto her, " O woman, great is thy faith; be " it unto thee, even as thou wilt," Matt. xv. 26, 27, 28. The prodigal ſon ſaid, " I will ariſe and go to my father, and I will " ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt heaven, and be- " fore thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy ſon; make " me as one of thy hired ſervants," Luke xv. 18, &c. See alſo Luke xviii. 9, &c. " And he ſpake this parable unto certain " which truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and " deſpiſed others, &c.—The publican ſtanding afar off, would " not ſo much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but ſmote upon " his breaſt, ſaying, God be merciful to me a ſinner. I tell " you, this man went down to his houſe juſtified rather than the " other: for every one that exalteth himſelf, ſhall be abaſed; " and he that humbleth himſelf, ſhall be exalted." Matt. xxviii. 9. " And they came and held him by the feet, and worſhipped " him." Col. iii. 12. " Put ye on, as the elect of God—humbleneſs of mind." Ezek. xx. 41, 43. " I will accept you " with your ſweet ſavour, when I bring you out from the " people, &c.—And there ſhall ye remember your ways, and " all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye ſhall " lothe yourſelves in your own ſight, for all your evils that ye " have committed." Chap. xxxvi. 26, 27, 31. " A new heart " alſo will I give unto you—and I will put my Spirit within " you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes, &c.—Then ſhall " ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were " not good, and ſhall lothe yourſelves in your own ſight, for " your iniquities, and for your abominations." Chap. xvi. 63. " That thou mayſt remember and be confounded, and ne- " ver open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, when " I am pacified toward thee for all that thou haſt done, ſaith

" the

" the Lord." Job xlii. 6. " I abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt " and aſhes."

As we would therefore make the holy ſcriptures, our rule, in judging of the nature of true religion, and judging of our own religious qualifications and ſtate; it concerns us greatly to look at this humiliation, as one of the moſt eſſential things pertaining to true Chriſtianity.* This is the principal part of the great Chriſtian duty of *ſelf-denial*. That duty conſiſts in two things, *viz. firſt*, In a man's denying his worldly inclinations, and in forſaking and renouncing all worldly objects and enjoyments; and, *ſecondly*, In denying his natural ſelf-exaltation, and renouncing his own dignity and glory, and in being emptied of himſelf; ſo that he does freely, and from his very heart, as it were renounce himſelf, and annihilate himſelf. Thus the Chriſtian doth, in evangelical humiliation. And this latter is the greateſt and moſt difficult part of ſelf-denial: although they always go together, and one never truly is, where the other is not; yet natural men can come much nearer to the former than the latter. Many Anchorites and Recluſes have abandoned (though without any true mortification,) the wealth, and pleaſures, and common enjoyments of the world, who were far from renouncing their own dignity and righteouſneſs; they never denied themſelves for Chriſt, but only ſold one luſt to feed another, ſold a beaſtly luſt to pamper a deviliſh one; and ſo were never the better, but their latter end was worſe than their beginning; they turned out one black devil, to let in ſeven white ones, that were worſe than the firſt, though of a fairer countenance. It is inexpreſſible, and almoſt inconceivable, how ſtrong a ſelf-righteous, ſelf-exalting diſpoſition is naturally in man; and what he will not do and ſuffer, to feed and gratify it; and what lengths have been gone in a ſeeming ſelf-denial in other reſpects, by Eſſenes and Phariſees among the Jews, and by Papiſts, many ſects of heretics, and enthuſiaſts, among profeſſing

* Calvin, in his inſtitutions, Book II. chap. 2. § 11. ſays, " I was always exceedingly pleaſed with that ſaying of Chryſoſtom, ' The foundation of our philoſophy is humility;' and yet more pleaſed with that of Auguſtine, ' As, ſays he, the rhetorician being aſked, what was the firſt thing in the rules of eloquence, he anſwered, Pronunciation; what was the ſecond, pronunciation; what was the third, ſtill he anſwered, pronunciation. So if you ſhould aſk me concernining the precepts of the Chriſtian religion, I would anſwer, firſtly, ſecondly, and thirdly, and for ever, Humility."

profeſſing Chriſtians; and by many Mahometans; and by Pythagorean philoſophers, and others, among the Heathen: and all to do ſacrifice to this Moloch of ſpiritual pride or ſelf-righteouſneſs; and that they may have ſomething wherein to exalt themſelves before God, and above their fellow-creatures.

That humiliation which has been ſpoken of, is what all the moſt glorious hypocrites, who make the moſt ſplendid ſhew of mortification to the world, and high religious affection, do groſsly fail in. Were it not that this is ſo much inſiſted on in ſcripture, as a moſt eſſential thing in true grace; one would be tempted to think that many of the heathen philoſophers were truly gracious, in whom was ſo bright an appearance of many virtues, and alſo great illuminations, and inward fervors and elevations of mind, as though they were truly the ſubjects of divine illapſes and heavenly communications.† It is true, that many hypocrites make great pretences to humility, as well as

† "Albeit the Pythagoreans were thus famous for Judaic myſterious wiſdom, and many moral, as well as natural accompliſhments; yet were they not exempted from boaſting and pride; which was indeed a vice moſt epidemic, and as it were congenial, among all the philoſophers; but in a more particular manner, among the Pythagoreans. So Hornius Hiſt. Philoſoph. L. 3. chap. 11. *The manners of the Pythagoreans were not free from boaſting. They were all* ΠΕΡΙΑΥΤΟΔΟΓΟΙ, *ſuch as abounded in the ſenſe and commendation of their own excellencies, and boaſting even almoſt to the degree of immodeſty and impudence, as great* Heinſius ad Horat, *has rightly obſerved.* Thus indeed does proud nature delight to walk in the ſparks of its own fire. And although many of theſe old philoſophers could, by the ſtrength of their own lights and heats, together with ſome common elevations and raiſures of ſpirit, (peradventure from a more than ordinary, though not ſpecial and ſaving aſſiſtance of the Spirit,) abandon many groſſer vices; yet they were all deeply immerſed in that miſerable curſed abyſs of ſpiritual pride: ſo that all their natural, and moral and philoſophic attainments, did feed, nouriſh, ſtrengthen, and render moſt inveterate, this hell bred peſt of their hearts. Yea thoſe of them that ſeemed moſt modeſt, as the Academics, who profeſſed they knew nothing, and the Cynics, who greatly decried, both in words and habits, the pride of others, yet even they abounded in the moſt notorious and viſible pride. So connatural and morally eſſential to corrupt nature, in this envenomed root, fountain, and plague of ſpiritual pride; eſpecially where there is any natural, moral, or philoſophic excellence to feed the ſame. Whence Auſtin rightly judged all theſe philoſophic virtues, to be but ſplendid ſins."
Gale's Court of the Gentiles, Part II. B. ii. chap. 10. § 17.

other graces; and very often there is nothing whatsoever what they make a higher profession of. They endeavour to make a great shew of humility in speech and behaviour; but they commonly make bungling work of it, though glorious work in their own eyes. They cannot find out what a humble speech and behaviour is, or how to speak and act so that there may indeed be a savour of Christian humility in what they say and do: that sweet humble air and mien is beyond their art, being not *led by the Spirit*, or naturally guided to a behaviour becoming holy humility, by the vigor of a lowly spirit within them. And therefore they have no other way, many of them, but only to be much in declaring that they be humble, and telling how they were humbled to the dust at such and such times, and abounding in very bad expressions which they use about themselves; such as, *I am the least of all saints, I am a poor vile creature, I am not worthy of the least mercy, or that God should look upon me! Oh, I have a dreadful wicked heart! my heart is worse than the devil! Oh, this cursed heart of mine*, &c. Such expressions are very often used, not with a heart that is broken, not with spiritual mourning, not with the tears of her that washed Jesus's feet with her tears, not as *remembering and being confounded, and never opening their mouth more because of their shame, when God is pacified*, as the expression is, Ezek. xvi. 63. but with a light air, with smiles in the countenance, or with a pharisaical affectation: and we must believe that they are thus humble, and see themselves so vile, upon the credit of their *say so*; for there is nothing appears in them of any savour of humility, in the manner of their deportment and deeds that they do. There are many that are full of expressions of their own vileness, who yet expect to be looked upon as eminent and bright saints by others, as their due; and it is dangerous for any, so much as to hint the contrary, or to carry it towards them any otherwise, than as if we looked upon them some of the chief of Christians. There are many that are much in crying out of their wicked hearts, and their great short-comings, and unprofitableness, and speaking as though they looked on themselves as the meanest of the saints; who yet, if a minister should seriously tell them the same things in private, and should signify, that he feared they were very low and weak Christians, and thought they had reason solemnly to consider of their great barrenness and unprofitableness, and falling so much short of many others; it would be more than they could digest; they would think themselves highly injured; and there

would

would be danger of a rooted prejudice in them againſt ſuch a miniſter.

There are ſome that are abundant in talking againſt *legal doctrines*, *legal preaching*, and a *legal ſpirit*, who do but little underſtand the thing they talk againſt. A *legal ſpirit* is a more ſubtil thing than they imagine, it is too ſubtil for them. It lurks, and operates, and prevails in their hearts, and they are moſt notoriouſly guilty of it, at the ſame time, when they are inveighing againſt it. So far as a man is not emptied of himſelf, and of his own righteouſneſs and goodneſs, in whatever form or ſhape, ſo far he is of a *legal ſpirit*. A ſpirit of pride of a man's own righteouſneſs, morality, holineſs, affection, experience, faith, humiliation, or any goodneſs whatſoever, is a legal ſpirit. It was no pride in Adam before the fall, to be of a legal ſpirit; becauſe of his circumſtances, he might ſeek acceptance by his own righteouſneſs. But a legal ſpirit in a fallen ſinful creature, can be nothing alſo but ſpiritual pride; and reciprocally, a ſpiritually proud ſpirit is a legal ſpirit. There is no man living that is lifted up with a conceit of his own experiences and diſcoveries, and upon the account of them gliſters in his own eyes, but what truſts in his experiences, and makes a righteouſneſs of them; however he may uſe humble terms, and ſpeak of his experiences as of the *great things God has done for him*, and it may be calls upon others to glorify God for them; yet he that is proud of his experiences, arrogates ſomething to himſelf, as though his experiences were ſome dignity of his. And if he looks on them as his own dignity, he neceſſarily thinks that God looks on them ſo too; for he neceſſarily thinks his own opinion of them to be true; and conſequently judges that God looks on them as he does; and ſo unavoidably imagines that God looks on his experiences as a dignity in him, as he looks on them himſelf; and that he gliſters as much in God's eyes, as he does in his own. And thus he truſts in what is inherent in him, to make him ſhine in God's ſight, and recommend him to God: and with this encouragement he goes before God in prayer; and this makes him expect much from God; and this makes him think that Chriſt loves him, and that he is willing to clothe him with his righteouſneſs; becauſe he ſuppoſes that he is taken with his experiences and graces. And this is a high degree of living on his own righteouſneſs; and ſuch perſons are in the high road to hell. Poor deluded wretches, who think they look ſo gliſtering in God's eyes, when they are a ſmoke in his noſe, and are

many

many of them more odious to him, than the moſt impure beaſt in Sodom, that makes no pretence to religion! To do as theſe do, is to *live upon experiences*, according to the true notion of it; and not to do as thoſe, who only make uſe of ſpiritual experiences, as evidences of a ſtate of grace, and in that way receive hope and comfort from them.

There is a ſort of men, who indeed abundantly cry down works, and cry up faith in oppoſition to works, and ſet up themſelves very much as evangelical perſons, in oppoſition to thoſe that are of a legal ſpirit, and make a fair ſhew of advancing Chriſt and the goſpel, and the way of free grace; who are indeed ſome of the greateſt enemies to the goſpel-way of free grace, and the moſt dangerous oppoſers of pure humble Chriſtianity.†

There is a pretended great humiliation, and being dead to the law, and emptied of ſelf, which is one of the biggeſt and moſt elated things in the world. Some there are, who have made great profeſſion of experience of a thorough work of the law on their own hearts, and of being brought fully off from works; whoſe converſation has favoured moſt of a ſelf-righteous ſpirit, of any that ever I had opportunity to obſerve. And ſome who think themſelves quite emptied of themſelves, and

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† "Take not every opinion and doctrine from men or angels, that bears a fair ſhew of advancing Chriſt; for they may be but the fruits of evangelical hypocriſy and deceit; that being deceived themſelves, may deceive others too; Matth. vii. 15. "Beware of "them, that come in ſheep's cloathing;" in the innocency, purity, and meekneſs of Chriſt and his people; "but inwardly are wolves," proud, cruel, cenſorious, *ſpeaking evil of what they know not. By their fruits you ſhall know them.* Do not think, beloved, that Satan will not ſeek to ſend deluſions among us. And do you think theſe deluſions will come out of the Popiſh pack, whoſe inventions ſmell above ground here? No, he muſt come, and will come with more evangelical, fine-ſpun devices. It is a rule obſerved amongſt Jeſuits, at this day, if they would conquer religion by ſubtilty, never oppoſe religion with a croſs religion; but ſet it againſt itſelf. So oppoſe the goſpel by the goſpel. And look, as churches pleading for works, had new invented deviſed works; ſo when faith is preached, men will have their new inventions of faith. I ſpeak not this againſt the doctrine of faith, where it is preached; but am glad of it: not that I would have men content themſelves with every form of faith; for I believe that moſt mens faith needs confirming or trying. But I ſpeak to prevent danger on that hand." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 122.

are confident that they are abaſed in the duſt, are full as they can hold with the glory of their own humility, and lifted up to heaven with an high opinion of their abaſement. Their humility is a ſwelling, ſelf-conceited, confident, ſhowy, noiſy, aſſuming humility. It ſeems to be the nature of ſpiritual pride to make men conceited and oſtentatious of their humility. This appears in that firſt-born of pride, among the children of men, that would be called *his holineſs*, even the man of ſin, that exalts himſelf above all that is called God or is worſhipped; he ſtyles himſelf *ſervant of ſervants*;-and to make a ſhew of humility, waſhes the feet of a number of poor men at his inauguration.

For perſons to be truly emptied of themſelves, and to be poor in ſpirit, and broken in heart, is quite another thing, and has other effects, than many imagine. It is aſtoniſhing how greatly many are deceived about themſelves as to this matter, imagining themſelves moſt humble, when they are moſt proud, and their behaviour is really the moſt haughty. The deceitfulneſs of the heart of man appears in no one thing ſo much, as this of ſpiritual pride and ſelf-righteouſneſs. The ſubtilty of Satan appears in its height, in his managing of perſons with reſpect to this ſin. And perhaps one reaſon may be, that here he has moſt experience: he knows the way of its coming in; he is acquainted with the ſecret ſprings of it; it was his own ſin. Experience gives vaſt advantage in leading ſouls, either in good or evil.

But though ſpiritual pride be ſo ſubtil and ſecret an iniquity, and commonly appears under a pretext of great humility; yet here are two things by which it may (perhaps univerſally and ſurely) be diſcovered and diſtinguiſhed.

The *firſt* thing is this; he that is under the prevalence of this diſtemper, is apt to think highly of his attainments in religion, as comparing himſelf with others. It is natural for him to fall into that thought of himſelf, that he is an eminent ſaint, that he is very high amongſt the ſaints, and has diſtinguiſhingly good and great experiences. That is the ſecret language of his heart, Luke xviii. 11. "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men." And If. lxv. 5. "I am holier than thou." Hence ſuch are apt to put themſelves forward among God's people, and as it were to take a high ſeat among them, as if there was no doubt of it but it belonged to them. They, as it were, naturally do that which Chriſt condemns, Luke xiv. 7. &c.

take

take the higheſt room. This they do, by being forward to ta
upon them the place and buſineſs of the chief; to guide, teac
direct and manage; "They are confident that they are guid
"to the blind, a light of them which are in darkneſs, inſtru
"tors of the fooliſh, teachers of babes," Rom. ii. 19, 20.
is natural for them to take it for granted, that it belongs to the
to do the part of dictators and maſters in matters of religion
and ſo they implicitly affect to be called of men Rabbi, whi
is by interpretation Maſter, as the Phariſees did, Matth, xxi
6. 7. *i. e.* they are apt to expect that others ſhould regard the
and yield to them, as maſters, in matters of religion.*

But he whoſe heart is under the power of Chriſtian humilit
is of a contrary diſpoſition. If the ſcriptures are at all to
relied on, ſuch an one is apt to think his attainments in religi
to be comparatively mean, and to eſteem himſelf low amo
the ſaints, and one of the leaſt of ſaints. Humility, or true lo
lineſs of mind, diſpoſes perſons to think others better th
themſelves; Phil. ii. 3. "In lowlineſs of mind, let each eſtee
"others better than themſelves." Hence they are apt to thi
the loweſt room belongs to them; and their inward diſpoſiti
naturally leads them to obey that precept of our Saviour, Lu
xiv. 10. It is not natural to them to take it upon them to
the part of teachers; but on the contrary, they are diſpoſed
think that they are not the perſons, that others are fitter for
than they; as it was with Moſes and Jeremiah, (Exod. iii. 1
Jer. i. 6.) though they were ſuch eminent ſaints, and of gre
knowlege. It is not natural to them to think that it belongs
them to teach, but to be taught: they are much more eager
hear, and to receive inſtruction from others, than to dictate
others; Jam. i. 19. "Be ye ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak." A
when they do ſpeak, it is not natural to them to ſpeak with a bol
maſterly air; but humility diſpoſes them rather to ſpeak, tre
bling. Hoſ. xiii. 1. "When Ephraim ſpake, trembling,
"exalted himſelf in Iſrael; but when he offended in Baal,
"died." They are not apt to aſſume authority, and to tal
upon them to be chief managers and maſters; but rather to
ſubject

* "There be two things wherein it appears that a man has on
common gifts, and no inward principle; 1. Theſe gifts ever puff u
and make a man ſomething in his own eyes, as the Corinthian know
lege did; and many a private man thinks himſelf fit to be a miniſter
Shepard's Parable, Part I. p. 181, 182.

ſubject to others; Jam. iii. 1, 2. "Be not many maſters." 1 Pet. v. 5. "All of you be ſubject one to another, and be clothed with "humility." Eph. v. 21. "Submitting yourſelves one to ano-"ther in the fear of God."

There are ſome perſons experiences that naturally work that way, to make them think highly of their experiences; and they do often themſelves ſpeak of their experiences as very great and extraordinary; they freely ſpeak of the *great things they have met with*. This may be ſpoken and meant in a good ſenſe. In one ſenſe, every degree of ſaving mercy is a *great thing*: it is indeed a thing *great*, yea, *infinitely great*, for God to beſtow the leaſt crumb of childrens bread on ſuch dogs as we are in ourſelves; and the more humble a perſon is that hopes that God has beſtowed ſuch mercy on him, the more apt will he be to call it a *great thing that he has met with*, in this ſenſe. But if by *great things which they have experienced*, they mean comparatively great ſpiritual experiences, or great compared with others experiences, or beyond what is ordinary, which is evidently oftentimes the caſe; then for a perſon to ſay, *I have met with great things*, is the very ſame thing as to ſay, *I am an eminent ſaint*, and have more grace than ordinary: for to have great experiences, if the experiences be true and worth the telling of, is the ſame thing as to have great grace: there is no true experience, but the exerciſe of grace; and exactly according to the degree of true experience, is the degree of grace and holineſs. The perſons that talk thus about their experiences, when they give an account of them, expect that others ſhould admire them. Indeed they do not call it boaſting to talk after this manner about their experiences, nor do they look upon it as any ſign of pride: becauſe they ſay, *they know that it was not they that did it, it was free grace, they are the great things that God has done for them, they would acknowledge the great mercy God has ſhown them, and not make light of it.* But ſo it was with the Phariſee that Chriſt tells us of, Luke xviii. He in words gave God the glory of making him to differ from other men; *God, I thank thee*, ſays he, *that I am not as other men.** Their verbally aſcribing it to the grace of God, that they

* Calvin, in his Inſtitutions, B. III. chap. xii. § 7. ſpeaking of this Phariſee, obſerves, "That in his outward confeſſion, he acknowledges that the righteouſneſs that he has is the gift of God: but (ſays he) becauſe he truſts *that he is righteous*, he goes away out of the preſence of God, unacceptable and odious."

they are holier than other ſaints, does not hinder their forwar
neſs to think ſo highly of their holineſs, being a ſure eviden
of the pride and vanity of their minds. If they were under t
influence of an humble ſpirit, their attainments in religi
would not be ſo apt to ſhine in their own eyes, nor would th
be ſo much in admiring their own beauty. The Chriſtia
that are really the moſt eminent ſaints, and therefore have t
moſt excellent experiences, "and are greateſt in the kingdo
"of heaven, humble themſelves as a little child," Matt. xvi
4. becauſe they look on themſelves as but little children
grace, and their attainments to be but the attainments of bab
in Chriſt, and are aſtoniſhed at, and aſhamed of the low degre
of their love, and their thankfulneſs, and their little know
lege of God. Moſes when he had been converſing with G
in the mount, and his face ſhone ſo bright in the eyes of othe
as to dazzle their eyes, *wiſt not that his face ſhone.* There a
ſome perſons that go by the name of high profeſſors, and ſom
will own themſelves to be high profeſſors, but eminently hum
ble ſaints, that will ſhine brighteſt in heaven, are not at all a
to profeſs high. I do not believe there is an eminent fai
in the world that is a high profeſſor. Such will be much mo
likely to profeſs themſelves to be the leaſt of all ſaints, and t
think that every ſaint's attainments and experiences are highe
than his.†

Such

† Luther, as his words are cited by Rutherfoord, in his *Diſplay*
the ſpiritual Antichriſt, p. 143, 144. ſays thus, "So is the life of
Chriſtian, that he that has begun, ſeems to himſelf to have nothing
but ſtrives and preſſes forward, that he may apprehend. Whenc
Paul ſays, *I count not myſelf to have apprehended.* For indeed nothin
is more pernicious to a believer, than that preſumption, that he ha
already apprehended, and has no further need of ſeeking. Hence al
many fall back, and pine away in ſpiritual ſecurity and ſlothfulneſ
So Bernard ſays, *To ſtand ſtill in God's way, is to go back.* Where
fore this remains to him that has begun to be a Chriſtian, to think
that he is not yet a Chriſtian, but to ſeek that he may be a Chriſtian
that he may glory with Paul, *I am not, but I deſire to be*; a Chriſtia
not yet finiſhed, but only in his beginnings. Therefore he is not
Chriſtian, that is a Chriſtian, that is, he that thinks himſelf a finiſhe
Chriſtian, and is not ſenſible how he falls ſhort. We reach after hea
ven, but are not in heaven. Wo to him that is wholly renewed, tha
is, that thinks himſelf to be ſo. That man, without doubt, has ne
ver ſo much as begun to be renewed, nor did he ever taſte what it is t
be a Chriſtian."

Such is the nature of grace, and of true ſpiritual light that they naturally diſpoſe the ſaints in the preſent ſtate, to look upon their grace and goodneſs little, and their deformity great. And they that have the moſt grace and ſpiritual light, of any in this world, have moſt of this diſpoſition. As will appear moſt clear and evident to any one that ſoberly and thoroughly weighs the nature and reaſon of things, and conſiders the things following.

That grace and holineſs is worthy to be called little, that is, little in compariſon of what it ought to be. And ſo it ſeems to one that is truly gracious: for ſuch an one has his eye upon the rule of his duty; a conformity to that is what he aims at; it is what his ſoul ſtruggles and reaches after; and it is by that that he eſtimates and judges of what he does, and what he has. To a gracious ſoul, and eſpecially to one eminently gracious, *that* holineſs appears little, which is little of what it ſhould be; little of what he ſees infinite reaſon for, and obligation to. If his holineſs appears to him to be at a vaſt diſtance from this, it naturally appears deſpicable in his eyes, and not worthy to be mentioned as any beauty or amiableneſs in him. For the like reaſon as a hungry man naturally accounts that which is ſet before him, but a little food, a ſmall matter, not worth mentioning, that is nothing in compariſon of his appetite. Or as the child of a great prince, that is jealous for the honor of his father, and beholds the reſpect which men ſhew him, naturally looks on that honor and reſpect very little, and not worthy to be regarded, which is nothing in compariſon of that which the dignity of his father requires.

But that is the nature of true grace and ſpiritual light, that it opens to a perſon's view the infinite reaſon there is that he ſhould be holy in a high degree. And the more grace he has, the more this is opened to view, the greater ſenſe he has of the infinite excellency and glory of the divine Being, and of the infinite dignity of the perſon of Chriſt, and the boundleſs length and breadth, and depth and height, of the love of Chriſt to ſinners. And as grace increaſes, the field opens more and more to a diſtant view, until the ſoul is ſwallowed up with the vaſtneſs of the object, and the perſon is aſtoniſhed to think how much it becomes him to love this God, and this glorious Redeemer, that has ſo loved man, and how little he does love. And ſo the more he apprehends, the more the ſmallneſs of his grace and love appears ſtrange and wonderful;

and therefore is more ready to think that others are beyond him. For wondering at the littleneſs of his own grace, he can ſcarcely believe that ſo ſtrange a thing happens to other ſaints: it is amazing to him, that one that is really a child of God, and that has actually received the ſaving benefits of that unſpeakable love of Chriſt, ſhould love no more: and he is apt to look upon it as a thing peculiar to himſelf, a ſtrange and exempt inſtance; for he ſees only the outſide of other Chriſtians, but he ſees his own inſide.

Here the reader may poſſibly object, that love to God is really increaſed in proportion as the knowlege of God is increaſed; and therefore how ſhould an increaſe of knowlege in a ſaint, make his love appear leſs, in compariſon of what is known? To which I anſwer, that although grace and the love of God in the ſaints, be anſwerable to the degree of knowlege or ſight of God; yet it is not in proportion to the object ſeen and known. The ſoul of a ſaint, by having ſomething of God opened to ſight, is convinced of much more than is ſeen. There is ſomething that is ſeen, that is wonderful; and that ſight brings with it a ſtrong conviction of ſomething vaſtly beyond, that is not immediately ſeen. So that the ſoul, at the ſame time, is aſtoniſhed at its ignorance, and that it knows ſo little, as well as that it loves ſo little. And as the ſoul, in a ſpiritual view, is convinced of infinitely more in the object, yet beyond ſight; ſo it is convinced of the capacity of the ſoul, of knowing vaſtly more, if clouds and darkneſs were but removed. Which cauſes the ſoul, in the enjoyment of a ſpiritual view, to complain greatly of ſpiritual ignorance, and want of love, and long and reach after more knowlege, and more love.

Grace and the love of God in the moſt eminent ſaints in this world, is truly very little in compariſon of what it ought to be. Becauſe the higheſt love, that ever any attain to in this life, is poor, cold, exceeding low, and not worthy to be named in compariſon of what our obligations appear to be, from the joint conſideration of theſe two things; *viz.* 1. The reaſon God has given us to love him, in the manifeſtations he has made of his infinite glory, in his word, and in his works; and particularly in the goſpel of his Son, and what he has done for ſinful man by him. And, 2. The capacity there is in the ſoul of man, by thoſe intellectual faculties which God has given it, of ſeeing and underſtanding theſe reaſons, which God has given us to love him. How ſmall indeed is the love of the

moſt

moſt eminent ſaint on earth, in compariſon of what theſe things jointly conſidered do require! And this grace tends to convince men of; and eſpecially eminent grace: for grace is of the nature of light, and brings truth to view. And therefore he that has much grace, apprehends much more than others, that great height to which his love ought to aſcend; and he ſees better than others, how little a way he has riſen towards that height. And therefore, eſtimating his love by the whole height of his duty, hence it appears aſtoniſhingly little and low in his eyes.

And the eminent ſaint, having ſuch a conviction of the high degree in which he ought to love God, this ſhews him, not only the littleneſs of his grace, but the greatneſs of his remaining corruption. In order to judge how much corruption or ſin we have remaining in us, we muſt take our meaſure from that height to which the rule of our duty extends: the whole of the diſtance we are at from that height, is ſin: for failing of duty is ſin; otherwiſe our duty is not our duty; and by how much the more we fall ſhort of our duty, ſo much the more ſin have we. Sin is no other than diſagreeableneſs, in a moral agent, to the law, or rule of his duty. And therefore the degree of ſin is to be judged of by the rule: ſo much diſagreeableneſs to the rule, ſo much ſin, whether it be in *defect* or *exceſs*. Therefore if men, in their love to God, do not come up half way to that height which duty requires, then they have more corruption in their hearts than grace; becauſe there is more goodneſs wanting, than is there; and all that is wanting is ſin: it is an abominable defect; and appears ſo to the ſaints, eſpecially thoſe that are eminent; it appears exceeding abominable to them, that Chriſt ſhould be loved ſo little, and thanked ſo little for his dying love; it is in their eyes hateful ingratitude.

And then the increaſe of grace has a tendency another way, to cauſe the ſaints to think their deformity vaſtly more than their goodneſs: it not only tends to convince them that their corruption is much greater than their goodneſs, which is indeed the caſe; but it alſo tends to cauſe the deformity that there is in the leaſt ſin, or the leaſt degree of corruption, to appear ſo great, as vaſtly to outweigh all the beauty there is in their greateſt holineſs; for this alſo is indeed the caſe. For the leaſt ſin againſt an infinite God, has an infinite hatefulneſs or deformity in it; but the higheſt degree of holineſs in a creature, has not an infinite lovelineſs in it: and therefore the

lovelineſs of it is as nothing, in compariſon of the deformity of the leaſt ſin. That every ſin has infinite deformity and hatefulneſs in it, is moſt demonſtrably evident; becauſe what the evil, or iniquity, or hatefulneſs of ſin conſiſts in, is the violating of an obligation, or the being or doing contrary to what we ſhould be or do, or are obliged to. And therefore by how much the greater the obligation is that is violated, ſo much the greater is the iniquity and hatefulneſs of the violation. But certainly our obligation to love and honor any being, is in ſome proportion to his lovelineſs and honourableneſs, or to his worthineſs to be loved and honored by us; which is the ſame thing. We are ſurely under greater obligation to love a more lovely being, than a leſs lovely: and if a Being be infinitely lovely or worthy to be loved by us, then our obligations to love him, are infinitely great: and therefore, whatever is contrary to this love, has in it infinite iniquity, deformity, and unworthineſs. But on the other hand, with reſpect to our holineſs or love to God, there is not an infinite worthineſs in that. The ſin of the creature againſt God, is ill-deſerving and hateful in proportion to the diſtance there is between God and the creature: the greatneſs of the object, and the meanneſs and inferiority of the ſubject, aggravates it. But it is the reverſe with regard to the worthineſs of the reſpect of the creature to God; it is *worthleſs*, and not worthy, in proportion to the meanneſs of the ſubject. So much the greater the diſtance between God and the creature, ſo much the leſs is the creature's reſpect worthy of God's notice or regard. The great degree of ſuperiority increaſes the obligation on the inferior to regard the ſuperior; and ſo makes the want of regard more hateful: but the great degree of inferiority diminiſhes the worth of the regard of the inferior; becauſe the more he is inferior, the leſs is he worthy of notice, the leſs he is, the leſs is what he can offer worth; for he can offer no more than himſelf, in offering his beſt reſpect; and therefore as he is little, and little worth, ſo is his reſpect little worth. And the more a perſon has of true grace and ſpiritual light, the more will it appear thus to him; the more will he appear to himſelf infinitely deformed by reaſon of ſin, and the leſs will the goodneſs that is in his grace, or good experience, appear in proportion to it. For indeed it is nothing to it; it is leſs than a drop to the ocean; for finite bears no proportion at all to that which is infinite. But the more a perſon has of ſpiritual light, the more do things appear

to

to him, in this reſpect, as they are indeed. Hence it moſt demonſtrably appears, that true grace is of that nature, that the more a perſon has of it, with remaining corruption, the leſs does his goodneſs and holineſs appear, in proportion to his deformity; and not only to his paſt deformity, but to his preſent deformity, in the ſin that now appears in his heart, and in the abominable defects of his higheſt and beſt affections, and brighteſt experiences.

The nature of many high religious affections, and great diſcoveries (as they are called) in many perſons that I have been acquainted with, is to hide and cover over the corruption of their hearts, and to make it ſeem to them as if all their ſins was gone, and to leave them without complaints of any hateful evil left in them; (though it may be they cry out much of their paſt unworthineſs;) a ſure and certain evidence that their diſcoveries (as they call them) are darkneſs and not light. It is darkneſs that hides mens pollution and deformity; but light let into the heart diſcovers it, ſearches it out in its ſecret corners, and makes it plainly to appear; eſpecially that penetrating, all-ſearching light of God's holineſs and glory. It is true, that ſaving diſcoveries may for the preſent hide corruption in one ſenſe; they reſtrain the *poſitive exerciſes* of it, ſuch as malice, envy, covetouſneſs, laciviouſneſs, murmuring, *&c.* but they bring corruption to light, in that which is privative, *viz.* that there is no more love, no more humility, no more thankfulneſs. Which defects appear moſt hateful, in the eyes of thoſe who have the moſt eminent exerciſes of grace; and are very burdenſome, and cauſe the ſaints to cry out of their leanneſs, and odious pride and ingratitude. And whatever poſitive exerciſes of corruption, at any time ariſe, and mingle themſelves with eminent actings of grace, grace will exceedingly magnify the view of them, and render their appearance far more henious and horrible.

The more eminent ſaints are, and the more they have of the light *of heaven* in their ſouls, the more do they appear to themſelves, as the moſt eminent ſaints in this world do, to the ſaints and angels *in heaven*. How can we rationally ſuppoſe the moſt eminent ſaints on earth appear to them, if beheld any otherwiſe, than covered over with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and their deformities ſwallowed up and hid in the coruſcation of the beams of his abundant glory and love? how can we ſuppoſe our moſt ardent love and praiſes appear to them, that do

behold

behold the beauty and glory of God without a vail? how do our higheſt thankfulneſs for the dying love of Chriſt appear them, who ſee Chriſt as he is, who know as they are know and ſee the glory of the perſon of him that died, and the wo ders of his dying love, without any cloud or darkneſs? and ho do they look on the deepeſt reverence and humility, with whi worms of the duſt on earth approach that infinite Majeſt which they behold? do they appear great to them, or ſo muc as worthy of the name of reverence and humility, in thoſe th they ſee to be at ſuch an infinite diſtance from that great a holy God, in whoſe glorious preſence they are? The reaſo why the higheſt attainments of the ſaints on earth appear mean to them, is becauſe they dwell in the light of God's glor and ſee God as he is. And it is in this reſpect with the ſain on earth, as it is with the ſaints in heaven, in proportion they are more eminent in grace.

I would not be underſtood, that the ſaints on earth have, all reſpects, the worſt opinion of themſelves, when they hav moſt of the exerciſe of grace. In many reſpects it is otherwi With reſpect to the poſitive exerciſes of corruption, they ma appear to themſelves freeſt and beſt when grace is moſt in e ercife, and worſt when the actings of grace are loweſt. A when they compare themſelves with themſelves, at differe times, they may know, when grace is in lively exerciſe, th it is better with them than it was before, (though before, the time of it, they did not ſee ſo much badneſs as they ſ now;) and when afterwards they ſink again in the frame their minds, they may know that they ſink, and have a ne argument of their great remaining corruption, and a *ration* conviction of a greater vileneſs than they ſaw before; and ma have more of a ſenſe of guilt, and a kind of *legal* ſenſe of the ſinfulneſs, by far, than when in the lively exerciſe of grac But yet it is true, and demonſtrable from the forementione conſiderations, that the children of God never have ſo muc of a *ſenſible* and *ſpiritual* conviction of their deformity, and great, and quick, and abaſing a ſenſe of their preſent vileneſs a odiouſneſs, as when they are higheſt in the exerciſe of true a pure grace; and never are they ſo much diſpoſed to ſet then ſelves low among Chriſtians as then. And thus *he that greateſt in the kingdom*, or moſt eminent in the church of Chri is the ſame *that humbles himſelf*, as the leaſt infant among them agreeable to that great ſaying of Chriſt, Matth. xviii. 4.

A

A true ſaint may know that he has ſome true grace: and the more grace there is, the more eaſily is it known; as was obſerved and proved before. But yet it does not follow, that an eminent ſaint is eaſily ſenſible that he is an eminent ſaint, when compared with others.—I will not deny that it is poſſible, that he that has much grace, and is an eminent ſaint, may know it. But he will not be apt to know it; it will not be a thing obvious to him: that he is better than others, and has higher experiences and attainments, is not a foremoſt thought; nor is it that which, from time to time, readily offers itſelf; it is a thing that is not in his way, but lies far out of ſight; he muſt take pains to convince himſelf of it; there will be need of a great command of reaſon, and a high degree of ſtrictneſs and care in arguing, to convince himſelf. And if he be rationally convinced, by a very ſtrict conſideration of his own experiences, compared with the great appearances of low degrees of grace in ſome other ſaints, it will hardly ſeem real to him, that he has more grace than they; and he will be apt to loſe the conviction, that he has by pains obtained; nor will it ſeem at all natural to him to act upon that ſuppoſition. And this may be laid down as an infallible thing. *That the perſon who is apt to think that he, as compared with others, is a very eminent ſaint, much diſtinguiſhed in Chriſtian experience, in whom this is a firſt thought, that riſes of itſelf, and naturally offers itſelf; he is certainly miſtaken; he is no eminent ſaint; but under the great prevailings of a proud and ſelf-righteous ſpirit.* And if this be habitual with the man, and is ſtatedly the prevailing temper of his mind, he is no ſaint at all; he has not the leaſt degree of any true Chriſtian experience; ſo ſurely as the word of God is true.

And that ſort of experiences that appears to be of that tendency, and is found from time to time to have that effect, to elevate the ſubject of them with a great conceit of thoſe experiences, is certainly vain and deluſive. Thoſe ſuppoſed diſcoveries that naturally blow up the perſon with an admiration of the eminency of his diſcoveries, and fill him with conceit, that now he has ſeen, and knows more than moſt other Chriſtians, have nothing of the nature of true ſpiritual light in them. All true ſpiritual knowlege is of that nature, that the more a perſon has of it, the more is he ſenſible of his own ignorance; as is evident by 1 Cor. viii. 2. "He that thinketh he knoweth any "thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." Agur,

when

when he had a great diſcovery of God, and ſenſe of the wond
ful height of his glory, and of his marvellous works, and cries
of his greatneſs and incomprehenſibleneſs ; at the ſame ti
had the deepeſt ſenſe of his brutiſh ignorance, and looked up
himſelf the moſt ignorant of all the ſaints ; Prov. xxx. 2, 3,
" Surely I am more brutiſh than any man, and have not the
" derſtanding of a man. I neither learned wiſdom, nor have
" knowlege of the holy. Who hath aſcended up into heaven,
" deſcended ? who hath gathered the wind in his fiſts ? who h
" bound the waters in a garment ? who hath eſtabliſhed all
" ends of the earth ? *what is his name*, and what is his ſo
" name, *if thou canſt tell?*

For a man to be highly conceited of his ſpiritual and div
knowlege, is for him to be wiſe in his own eyes, if any thi
is. And therefore it comes under thoſe prohibitions, Prov. iii.
" Be not wiſe in thine own eyes ;" Rom. xii. 16. " Be not w
" in your own conceits :" and brings men under that wo, Iſ
21. " Wo unto them that are wiſe in their own eyes, and p
" dent in their own ſight." Thoſe that are thus wiſe in th
own eyes, are ſome of the leaſt likely to get good of any in
world. Experience ſhews the truth of that, Prov. xxvi. 1
" Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit ? there is m
" hope of a fool than of him."

To this ſome may object, that the pſalmiſt, when we m
ſuppoſe that he was in a holy frame, ſpeaks of his knowle
as eminently great, and far greater than that of other fai
Pſal. cxix. 99, 100. " I have more underſtanding than all
" teachers : for thy teſtimonies are my meditation. I underſta
" more than the ancients : becauſe I keep thy precepts."

To this I anſwer two things :

(1.) There is no reſtraint to be laid upon the Spirit of G
as to what he ſhall reveal to a prophet, for the benefit of
church, who is ſpeaking or writing under *immediate inſpirati*
The Spirit of God may reveal to ſuch an one, and dictate
him, to declare to others, ſecret things, that otherwiſe wou
be hard, yea impoſſible for him to find out. As he may r
veal to him myſteries, that otherwiſe would be above the rea
of his reaſon ; or things in a diſtant place, that he cannot ſe
or future events, that it would be impoſſible for him to kno
and declare, if they were not extraordinarily revealed to hi
ſo the Spirit of God might reveal to David this diſtinguiſhi
benefit he had received, by converſing much with God's teſ
monies ; and uſe him as his inſtrument to record it for t
benefit

benefit he had received, by converſing much with God's teſtimonies; and uſe him as his inſtrument to record it for the benefit of others, to excite them to the like duty, and to uſe the ſame means to gain knowlege. Nothing can be gathered concerning the natural tendency of the *ordinary* gracious influences of the Spirit of God, from that, that David declares of his diſtinguiſhing knowlege under the *extraordinary* influences of God's Spirit, immediately dictating to him the divine mind by inſpiration, and uſing David as his inſtrument to write what he pleaſed for the benefit of his church; any more than we can reaſonably argue, that it is the natural tendency of grace to incline men to curſe others, and wiſh the moſt dreadful miſery to them that can be thought of, becauſe David, under inſpiration, often curſes others, and prays that ſuch miſery may come upon them.

(2.) It is not certain that the knowlege David here ſpeaks of, is ſpiritual knowlege, wherein holineſs does fundamentally conſiſt. But it may be that greater revelation which God made to him of the Meſſiah, and the things of his future kingdom, and the far more clear and extenſive knowlege that he had of the myſteries and doctrines of the goſpel, than others; as a reward for his keeping God's teſtimonies. In this, it is apparent by the book of Pſalms, that David far exceeded all that had gone before him.

Secondly, Another thing that is an infallible ſign of ſpiritual pride, is perſons being apt to think highly of their humility. Falſe experiences are commonly attended with a counterfeit humility. And it is the very nature of a counterfeit humility, to be highly conceited of itſelf. Falſe religious affections have generally that tendency, eſpecially when raiſed to a great height, to make perſons think that their humility is great, and accordingly to take much notice of their great attainments in this reſpect, and admire them. But eminently gracious affections (I ſcruple not to ſay it) are evermore of a contrary tendency, and have univerſally a contrary effect, in thoſe that have them. They indeed make them very ſenſible what reaſon there is that they ſhould be deeply humbled, and cauſe them earneſtly to thirſt and long after it; but they make their preſent humility, or that which they have already attained to, to appear ſmall; and their remaining pride great, and exceedingly abominable.

The reaſon why a proud perſon ſhould be apt to think his humility great, and why a very humble perſon ſhould think his

humility ſmall, may be eaſily ſeen, if it be conſidered, that it is natural for perſons, in judging of the degree of their own humiliation, to take their meaſure from that which they eſteem their proper height, or the dignity wherein they properly ſtand. That may be great humiliation in one, that is no humiliation at all in another; becauſe the degree of honorableneſs or conſiderableneſs, wherein each does properly ſtand, is very different. For ſome great man, to ſtoop to looſe the latchet of the ſhoes of another great man, his equal, or to waſh his feet, would be taken notice of as an act of abaſement in him; and he being ſenſible of his own dignity, would look upon it ſo himſelf. But if a poor ſlave is ſeen ſtooping to unlooſe the ſhoes of a great prince, no body will take any notice of this, as any act of humiliation in him, or token of any great degree of humility: nor would the ſlave himſelf, unleſs he be horribly proud, and ridiculouſly conceited of himſelf: and if after he had done it, he ſhould, in his talk and behaviour, ſhew that he thought his abaſement great in it, and had his mind much upon it, as an evidence of his being very humble: would not every body cry out upon him, "Who do you think yourſelf "to be, that you ſhould think this that you have done, ſuch a "deep humiliation?" This would make it plain to a demonſtration, that this ſlave was ſwollen with a high degree of pride and vanity of mind, as much as if he declared in plain terms, *I think myſelf to be ſome great one.* And the matter is no leſs plain and certain, when worthleſs, vile and loathſome worms of the duſt, are apt to put ſuch a conſtruction on their acts of abaſement before God; and to think it a token of great humility in them, that they, under their affections, can find themſelves ſo willing to acknowlege themſelves to be ſo and ſo mean and unworthy, and to behave themſelves as thoſe that are ſo inferior. The very reaſon why ſuch outward acts, and ſuch inward exerciſes, look like great abaſement in ſuch an one, is becauſe he has a high conceit of himſelf. Whereas if he thought of himſelf more juſtly, theſe things would appear nothing to him, and his humility in them worthy of no regard; but would rather be aſtoniſhed at his pride, that one ſo infinitely deſpicable and vile, is brought no lower before God.—When he ſays in his heart, "This is a great act of humiliation; it is "certainly a ſign of great humility in me, that I ſhould feel "thus, and do ſo:" his meaning is, "This is great humility "for me, for ſuch a one as I, that am ſo conſiderable and "worthy."

" worthy." He conſiders how low he is now brought, and compares this with the height of dignity, on which he in his heart thinks he properly ſtands, and the diſtance appears very great, and he calls it all mere humility, and as ſuch admires it. Whereas, in him that is truly humble, and really ſees his own vileneſs and loathſomeneſs before God, the diſtance appears the other way. When he is brought loweſt of all, it does not appear to him, that he is brought below his proper ſtation, but that he is not come to it; he appears to himſelf, yet vaſtly above it: he longs to get lower, that he may come to it; but appears at a great diſtance from it. And this diſtance he calls pride. And therefore his pride appears great to him, and not his humility. For although he is brought much lower than he uſed to be; yet it does not appear to him worthy of the name of humiliation, for him that is ſo infinitely mean and deteſtable to come down to a place, which though it be lower than what he uſed to aſſume, is yet vaſtly higher than what is proper for him. As men would hardly count it worthy of the name of humility, in a contemptible ſlave, that formerly affected to be a prince, to have his ſpirit ſo far brought down, as to take the place of a nobleman; when this is ſtill ſo far above his proper ſtation.

All men in the world, in judging of the degree of their own and others humility, as appearing in any act of theirs, conſider two things; *viz.* the real degree of dignity they ſtand in; and the degree of abaſement, and the relation it bears to that real dignity. Thus the complying with the ſame low place, or low act, may be an evidence of great humility in one, that evidences but little or no humility in another. But truly humble Chriſtians have ſo mean an opinion of their own real dignity, that all their ſelf-abaſement, when conſidered with relation to that, and compared with that, appears very ſmall to them. It does not ſeem to them to be any great humility, or any abaſement to be made much of, for ſuch poor, vile, abject creatures as they, to lie at the foot of God.

The degree of humility is to be judged of by the degree of *abaſement*, and the degree of the *cauſe for abaſement*: but he that is truly and eminently humble, never thinks his humility great, conſidering the cauſe. The cauſe why he ſhould be abaſed appears ſo great, and the abaſement of the frame of his heart ſo greatly ſhort of it, that he takes much more notice of his pride than his humility.

Every

Every one that has been converſant with ſouls under convictions of ſin, knows that thoſe who are greatly convinced of ſin, are not apt to think themſelves greatly convinced. And the reaſon is this: men judge of the degree of their own convictions of ſin by two things jointly conſidered; *viz.* the degree of ſenſe which they have of guilt and pollution, and the degree of cauſe they have for ſuch a ſenſe, in the degree of their real ſinfulneſs. It is really no argument of any great conviction of ſin, for ſome men to think themſelves to be very ſinful, beyond moſt others in the world; becauſe they are ſo indeed, very plainly and notoriouſly. And therefore a far leſs conviction of ſin may incline ſuch an one to think ſo than another; he muſt be very blind indeed not to be ſenſible of it. But he that is truly under great convictions of ſin, naturally thinks this to be his caſe. It appears to him, that the cauſe he has to be ſenſible of guilt and pollution, is greater than others have; and therefore he aſcribes his ſenſibleneſs of this, to the greatneſs of his ſin, and not to the greatneſs of his ſenſibility. It is natural for one under great convictions, to think himſelf one of the greateſt of ſinners in reality, and alſo that it is ſo very plainly and evidently; for the greater his convictions are, the more plain and evident it ſeems to be to him. And therefore it neceſſarily ſeems to him ſo plain and ſo eaſy to him to ſee it, that it may be ſeen without much conviction. *That* man is under great convictions, whoſe conviction is great in proportion to his ſin. But no man that is truly under great convictions, thinks his conviction great in proportion to his ſin. For if he does, it is a certain ſign that he inwardly thinks his ſins ſmall. And if that be the caſe, *that* is a certain evidence that his conviction is ſmall. And this, by the way, is the main reaſon, that perſons, when under a work of humiliation, are not ſenſible of it, in the time of it.

And as it is with conviction of ſin, juſt ſo it is, by parity of reaſon, with reſpect to perſons conviction or ſenſibleneſs of their own meanneſs and vileneſs, their own blindneſs, their own impotence, and all that low ſenſe that a Chriſtian has of himſelf, in the exerciſe of *evangelical humiliation*. So that in a high degree of this, the ſaints are never diſpoſed to think their ſenſibleneſs of their own meanneſs, filthineſs, impotence, *&c.* to be great; becauſe it never appears great to them, conſidering the cauſe.

An

An eminent ſaint is not apt to think himſelf eminent in any thing; all his graces and experiences are ready to appear to him to be comparatively ſmall; but eſpecially his humility. There is nothing that appertains to Chriſtian experience, and true piety, that is ſo much out of his ſight as his humility. He is a thouſand times more quick-ſighted to diſcern his pride, than his humility: *that* he eaſily diſcerns, and is apt to take much notice of, but hardly diſcerns his humility. On the contrary, the deluded hypocrite, that is under the power of ſpiritual pride, is ſo blind to nothing as his pride; and ſo quick-ſighted to nothing, as the ſhews of humility that are in him.

The humble Chriſtian is more apt to find fault with his own pride than with other mens. He is apt to put the beſt conſtruction on others words and behaviour, and to think that none are ſo proud as himſelf. But the proud hypocrite is quick to diſcern the mote in his brother's eye, in this reſpect; while he ſees nothing of the beam in his own. He is very often much in crying out of others pride, finding fault with others apparel, and way of living; and is affected ten times as much with his neighbour's ring or ribbon, as with all the filthineſs of his own heart.

From the diſpoſition there is in hypocrites to think highly of their humility, it comes to paſs that counterfeit humility is forward to put forth itſelf to view. Thoſe that have it, are apt to be much in ſpeaking of their humiliations, and to ſet them forth in high terms, and to make a great outward ſhew of humility, in affected looks, geſtures, or manner of ſpeech, or meanneſs of apparel, or ſome affected ſingularity. So it was of old with the falſe prophets, Zech. xiii. 4. ſo it was with the hypocritical Jews, Iſ. lvii. 5 and ſo Chriſt tells us it was with the Phariſees, Matth. vi. 16. But it is contrariwiſe with true humility; they that have it, are not apt to diſplay their eloquence in ſetting of it forth, or to ſpeak of the degree of their abaſement in ſtrong terms.* It does not affect

* It is an obſervation of Mr. Jones, in his excellent treatiſe of the canon of the New Teſtament, that the evangeliſt Mark, who was the companion of St. Peter, and is ſuppoſed to have written his goſpel under the direction of that apoſtle, when he mentions Peter's repentance after his denying his Maker, he does not uſe ſuch ſtrong terms to ſet it forth as the other evangeliſts, he only uſes theſe words, "When he thought thereon, he wept," Mark xiv. 72.; whereas the other evangeliſts ſay thus, "He went out, and wept bitterly," Matth. xvi. 75. Luke xxii. 62.

affect to ſhew itſelf in any ſingular outward meanneſs of appa
rel, or way of living ; agreeable to what is implied in Matt
vi. 17. "But thou, when thou faſteſt, anoint thine head, an
"waſh thy face." Col. ii. 23. "Which things have indee
"a ſhew of wiſdom in will-worſhip and humility, and negle
"ing of the body." Nor is true humility a noiſy thing ; it
not loud and boiſterous. The ſcripture repreſents it as of
contrary nature. Ahab, when he had a viſible humility, a r
ſemblance of true humility, *went ſoftly*, 1 Kings xxi. 27.
penitent, in the exerciſe of true humiliation, is repreſented
ſtill and ſilent, Lam. iii. 28. "He ſitteth alone and keepet
"ſilence, becauſe he hath borne it upon him." And ſilence
mentioned as what attends humility ; Prov. xxx. 32. "If tho
"haſt done fooliſhly in liftingup thyſelf, or if thou haſt thoug
"evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth."

Thus I have particularly and largely ſhewn the nature
that true humility that attends holy affections, as it appears
its tendency to cauſe perſons to think meanly of their attai
ments in religion, as compared with the attainments of other
and particularly, of their attainments in humility : and hav
ſhewn the contrary tendency of ſpiritual pride, to diſpoſe pe
ſons to think their attainments in theſe reſpects to be grea
I have inſiſted the longer on this matter, becauſe I look upo
it a matter of great importance, as it affords a certain diſtinctio
between true and counterfeit humility ; and alſo as this diſpo
ſition of hypocrites to look on themſelves better than other
is what God has declared to be very hateful to him, "a ſmok
"in his noſe, and a fire that burneth all the day," If. lxv.
It is mentioned as an inſtance of the pride of the inhabitan
of that holy city (as it was called) Jeruſalem, that they eſteeme
themſelves far better than the people of Sodom, and ſo looke
upon them worthy to be overlooked and diſregarded by them
Ezek. xvi. 56. "For thy ſiſter Sodom was not mentioned b
"thy mouth in the day of thy pride."

Let not the reader lightly paſs over theſe things in applica
tion to himſelf. If you once have taken it in, that it is a ba
ſign for a perſon to be apt to think himſelf a better ſaint tha
others, there will ariſe a blinding prejudice in your own favo
and there will probably be need of a great ſtrictneſs of ſelf-ex
amination, in order to determine whether it be ſo with you.
on the propoſal of the queſtion, you anſwer, *No, it ſeems t
me, none are ſo bad as I.* Do not let the matter paſs off ſo

but

but examine again, whether or no you do not think yourſelf better than others on this very account, becauſe you imagine you think ſo meanly of yourſelf. Have not you an high opinion of this humility? and if you anſwer again, *No, I have not an high opinion of my humility; it ſeems to me I am as proud as the devil*; yet examine again, whether ſelf-conceit do not riſe up under this cover; whether on this very account, that you think yourſelf as proud as the devil, you do not think yourſelf to be very humble.

From this oppoſition that there is between the nature of a true, and of a counterfeit humility, as to the eſteem that the ſubjects of them have of themſelves, ariſes a manifold contrariety of temper and behaviour.

A truly humble perſon, having ſuch a mean opinion of his righteouſneſs and holineſs, is *poor in ſpirit*. For a perſon to be poor in ſpirit, is to be in his own ſenſe and apprehenſion poor, as to what is in him, and to be of an anſwerable diſpoſition. Therefore a truly humble perſon, eſpecially one eminently humble; naturally behaves himſelf in many reſpects as a poor man. *The poor uſeth intreaties, but the rich anſwereth roughly.* A poor man is not diſpoſed to quick and high reſentment when he is among the rich: he is apt to yield to others, for he knows others are above him; he is not ſtiff and ſelf-willed; he is patient with hard fare: he expects no other than to be deſpiſed, and takes it patiently; he does not take it heinouſly that he is overlooked, and but little regarded.; he is prepared to be in low place; he readily honors his ſuperiors; he takes reproofs quietly; he readily honors others as above him; he eaſily yields to be taught, and does not claim much to his underſtanding and judgment; he is not over nice or humourſome, and has his ſpirit ſubdued to hard things; he is not aſſuming, nor apt to take much upon him, but it is natural for him to be ſubject to others. Thus it is with the humble Chriſtian. Humility is (as the great Maſtricht expreſſes it) *a kind of holy puſillanimity.*

A man that is very poor is a beggar; ſo is he that is poor in ſpirit. This is a great difference between thoſe affections that are gracious, and thoſe that are falſe: under the former, the perſon continues ſtill a poor beggar at God's gates, exceeding empty and needy; but the latter make men appear to themſelves

ſelves rich, and increaſed with goods, and not very nece
tous ; they have a great ſtock in their own imagination for th
ſubſiſtence.†

A poor man is modeſt in his ſpeech and behaviour ; ſo, a
much more, and more certainly and univerſally is one that
poor in ſpirit ; he is humble and modeſt in his behavio
amongſt men. It is in vain for any to pretend that they a
humble, and as little children before God, when they are haug
ty, aſſuming, and impudent in their behaviour amongſt me
The apoſtle informs us, that the deſign of the goſpel is to cut
all glorying, not only before God, but alſo before men, Ro
iv. 1, 2. Some pretend to great humiliation, that are ve
haughty, audacious and aſſuming in their external appearan
and behaviour; but they ought to conſider thoſe ſcripture
Pſal. cxxxi. 1. "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine ey
" lofty: neither do I exerciſe myſelf in great matters, or
" things too high for me." Prov. vi. 16, 17. "Theſe ſ
" things doth the Lord hate; yea, ſeven are an abominatio
" unto him: a proud look," &c.—Chap. xxi. 4. "An hig
" look, and a proud heart, are ſin." Pſal. xviii. 27. "Tho
" wilt bring down high looks." And Pſal. ci. 5. "Hi
" that hath an high look, and a proud heart, I will not ſuffer

1 Cor.

† "This ſpirit ever keeps a man poor and vile in his own eye
and empty.—When the man hath got ſome knowlege, and can di
courſe pretty well, and hath ſome taſtes of the heavenly gift, ſom
ſweet illapſes of grace, and ſo his conſcience is pretty well quieted
and if he hath got ſome anſwer to his prayers, and hath ſweet affec
tions, he grows full : and having eaſe to his conſcience, caſts o
ſenſe, and daily groaning under ſin. And hence the ſpirit of praye
dies : he loſes his eſteem of God's ordinances ; feels not ſuch nee
of them ; or gets no good, feels no life or power by them.—This i
the woful condition of ſome; but yet they know it not. But no
he that is filled with the Spirit, the Lord empties him ; and the more
the longer he lives. So that though others think he needs not muc
grace ; yet he accounts himſelf the pooreſt." *Shepard's Parable of th
ten virgins.* Part II. p. 132.

"After all fillings, be ever empty, hungry, and feeling need, and
praying for more." *Ibid.* p. 151.

"Truly, brethren, when I ſee the curſe of God upon many
Chriſtians, that are now grown full of their parts, gifts, peace, com-
forts, abilities, duties, I ſtand adoring the riches of the Lord's mercy,
to a little handful of poor believers ; not only in making them emp-
ty, but in keeping them ſo all their days." *Shepard's Sound Believer,*
the late edition in Boſton, p. 158, 159.

1 Cor. xiii. 4. "Charity vaunteth not itſelf, doth not behave "itſelf unſeemly." There is a certain amiable modeſty and fear that belongs to a Chriſtian behaviour among men, ariſing from humility, that the ſcripture often ſpeaks of; 1 Pet. iii. 15. "Be ready to give an anſwer to every man that aſketh you, "—with meekneſs and fear." Rom. xiii. 7. "Fear, to whom "fear." 2 Cor. vii. 15. "Whilſt he remembereth the obe- "dience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received "him." Eph. vi. 5. "Servants, be obedient to them that are "your maſters according to the fleſh, with fear and trembling." 1 Pet. ii. 18. "Servants, be ſubject to your maſters with all "fear." 1 Pet. iii. 2. "While they behold your chaſte con- "verſation coupled with fear." 1 Tim. ii. 9. "That women "adorn themſelves in modeſt apparel, with ſhamefacedneſs and "ſobriety." In this reſpect a Chriſtian is like a little child; a little child is modeſt before men, and his heart is apt to be poſſeſſed with fear and awe amongſt them.

The ſame ſpirit will diſpoſe a Chriſtian to honor all men; 1 Pet. ii. 17. "Honor all men." A humble Chriſtian is not only diſpoſed to honor the ſaints in his behaviour; but others alſo, in all thoſe ways that do not imply a viſible approbation of their ſins. Thus Abraham, the great pattern of believers, honored the children of Heth; Gen. xxiii. 11, 12. "Abraham "ſtood up, and bowed himſelf to the people of the land." This was a remarkable inſtance of a humble behaviour towards them that were out of Chriſt, and that Abraham knew to be accur- ſed: and therefore would by no means ſuffer his ſervant to take a wife to his ſon, from among them; and Eſau's wives, being of theſe children of Heth, were a grief of mind to Iſaac and Rebeckah. So Paul honored Feſtus, Acts xxvi. 25. "I "am not mad, moſt noble Feſtus." Not only will Chriſtian humility diſpoſe perſons to honor thoſe wicked men that are out of the viſible church, but alſo falſe brethren and perſecutors. As Jacob, when he was in an excellent frame, having juſt been wreſtling all night with God, and received the bleſſing, honor- ed Eſau, his falſe and perſecuting brother; Gen. xxxiii. 3. "Ja- "cob bowed himſelf to the ground ſeven times, until he came "near to his brother Eſau." So he called him *lord*; and com- manded all his family to honor him in like manner.

Thus I have endeavored to deſcribe the heart and behaviour of one that is governed by a truly gracious humility, as exactly agreeable to the ſcriptures, as I am able.

Now, it is out of ſuch a heart as this, that all truly holy affections do flow. Chriſtian affections are like Mary's precious ointment, that ſhe poured on Chriſt's head, that filled the whole houſe with a ſweet odour. *That* was poured out of an *alabaſter-box*; ſo gracious affections flow out to Chriſt out of a *pure heart*. That was poured out of a *broken box*; until the box was broken, the ointment could not flow, nor diffuſe its odour: ſo gracious affections flow out of a *broken heart*. Gracious affections are alſo like thoſe of Mary Magdalene, (Luke vii. at the latter end) who alſo pours precious ointment on Chriſt, out of an alabaſter broken box, anointing therewith the feet of Jeſus, when ſhe had waſhed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. All gracious affections, that are a ſweet odour to Chriſt, and that fill the ſoul of a Chriſtian with an heavenly ſweetneſs and fragrancy, are broken-hearted affections. A truly Chriſtian love, either to God or men, is a humble broken-hearted love. The deſires of the ſaints, however earneſt, are humble deſires: their hope is an humble hope; and their joy, even when it is *unſpeakable, and full of glory*, is a humble, broken-hearted joy, and leaves the Chriſtian more poor in ſpirit, and more like a little child, and more diſpoſed to an univerſal lowlineſs of behaviour.

VII. Another thing, wherein gracious affections are diſtinguiſhed from others, is, that *they are attended with a change of nature.*

All gracious affections do ariſe from a ſpiritual underſtanding, in which the ſoul has the excellency and glory of divine things diſcovered to it, as was ſhewn before. But all ſpiritual diſcoveries are transforming; and not only make an alteration of the preſent exerciſe, ſenſation and frame of the ſoul; but ſuch power and efficacy have they, that they make an alteration in the very nature of the ſoul; 2 Cor. iii. 18. "But we all with "open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are "changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by "the Spirit of the Lord." Such power as this is properly divine power, and is peculiar to *the Spirit of the Lord*: other power may make a great alteration in mens preſent frames and feelings; but it is the power of a Creator only that can change the nature, or give a new nature. And no diſcoveries or illuminations, but thoſe that are divine and ſupernatural, will have this ſupernatural effect. But this effect all thoſe diſcoveries have, that are truly divine. The ſoul is deeply affected by theſe diſcoveries, and ſo affected as to be transformed. Thus

Thus it is with thoſe affections that the ſoul is the ſubject of in its converſion. The ſcripture repreſentations of converſion do ſtrongly imply and ſignify a change of nature: ſuch as *being born again*; *becoming new creatures*; *riſing from the dead*; *being renewed in the ſpirit of the mind*; *dying to ſin, and living to righteouſneſs*; *putting off the old man, and putting on the new man*; *a being ingrafted into a new ſtock*; *a having a divine ſeed implanted in the heart*; *a being made partakers of the divine nature*, &c.

Therefore if there be no great and remarkable abiding change in perſons, that think they have experienced a work of converſion, vain are all their imaginations and pretences, however they have been affected.* Converſion (if we may give any credit to the ſcripture) is a great and univerſal change of the man, turning him from ſin to God. A man may be reſtrained from ſin, before he is converted; but when he is converted, he is not only reſtrained from ſin, his very heart and nature is turned from it unto holineſs: ſo that thenceforward he becomes a holy perſon, and an enemy to ſin. If therefore, after a perſon's high affections, at his ſuppoſed firſt converſion, it comes to that in a little time, that there is no very ſenſible, or remarkable alteration in him, as to thoſe bad qualities, and evil habits, which before were viſible in him, and he is ordinarily under the prevalence of the ſame kind of diſpoſitions that he uſed to be, and the ſame things ſeem to belong to his character, he appears as ſelfiſh, carnal, as ſtupid, and perverſe, as unchriſtian, and unſavoury as ever; it is greater evidence againſt him, than the brighteſt ſtory of experiences that ever was told, is for him. For in Chriſt Jeſus neither circumciſion, nor uncircumciſion, neither high profeſſion, nor low profeſſion, neither a fair ſtory, nor a broken one, avails any thing; but a new creature.

If there be a very great alteration viſible in a perſon for a while; if it be not abiding, but he afterwards returns, in a ſtated manner, to be much as he uſed to be; it appears to be no change of nature; for nature is an abiding thing. A ſwine that is of a filthy nature may be waſhed, but the ſwiniſh nature remains;

* "I would not judge of the whole ſoul's coming to Chriſt, ſo much by ſudden pangs, as by an inward bent. For the whole ſoul, in affectionate expreſſions and actions, may be carried to Chriſt; but being without this bent, and change of affections, is unſound." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 203.

remains; and a dove that is of a cleanly nature may be defiled, but its cleanly nature remains.†

Indeed allowances muſt be made for the natural temper: converſion does not entirely root out the natural temper: thoſe ſins which a man by his natural conſtitution was moſt inclined to before his converſion, he may be moſt apt to fall into ſtill. But yet converſion will make a great alteration even with reſpect to theſe ſins. Though grace, while imperfect, does not root out an evil natural temper, yet it is of great power and efficacy with reſpect to it, to correct it. The change that is wrought in converſion, is an univerſal change: grace changes a man with reſpect to whatever is ſinful in him; the *old man* is put off, and the *new man* put on; he is ſanctified throughout; and the man becomes a new creature, old things are paſſed away, and *all things* are become new; all ſin is mortified, conſtitution ſins, as well as others. If a man before his converſion, was by his natural conſtitution, eſpecially inclined to laſciviouſneſs, or drunkenneſs, or maliciouſneſs; converting grace will make a great alteration in him, with reſpect to theſe evil diſpoſitions; ſo that however he may be ſtill moſt in danger of theſe ſins, yet they ſhall no longer have dominion over him; nor will they any more be properly his character. Yea, true repentance does in ſome reſpects, eſpecially turn a man againſt his own iniquity, *that* wherein he has been moſt guilty, and has chiefly diſhonoured God. He that forſakes other ſins, but ſaves his leading ſin, the iniquity he is chiefly inclined to, is like Saul, when ſent againſt God's enemies the Amalekites, with a ſtrict charge to ſave none of them alive, but utterly to deſtroy them, ſmall and great; who utterly deſtroyed inferior people, but ſaved the king, the chief of them all, alive.

Some fooliſhly make it an argument in favor of their diſcoveries and affections, that when they are gone, they are left wholly without any life or ſenſe, or any thing beyond what they had before. They think it an evidence that what they experienced was wholly of God, and not of themſelves, becauſe (ſay they) when

† "It is with the ſoul, as with water; all the cold may be gone, but the native principle of cold remains ſtill. You may remove the burning of luſts, not the blackneſs of nature. Where the power of ſin lies, change of conſcience from ſecurity to terror, change of life from profaneneſs to civility, and faſhions of the world, to eſcape the pollutions thereof, change of luſts, nay quenching them for a time: but the nature is never changed, in the beſt hypocrite that ever was." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 194.

when God is departed, all is gone; they can ſee and feel nothing, and are no better than they uſed to be.

It is very true, that all grace and goodneſs in the hearts of the ſaints is entirely from God; and they are univerſally and immediately dependent on him for it. But yet theſe perſons are miſtaken, as to the manner of God's communicating himſelf and his Holy Spirit, in imparting ſaving grace to the ſoul. He gives his Spirit to be united to the faculties of the ſoul, and to dwe'l there after the manner of a principle of nature; ſo that the ſoul, in being endued with grace, is endued with a new nature: but nature is an abiding thing. All the exerciſes of grace are entirely from Chriſt: but thoſe exerciſes are not from Chriſt, as ſomething that is alive, moves and ſtirs ſomething that is without life, and yet remains without life; but as having life communicated to it; ſo as through Chriſt's power, to have inherent in itſelf, a vital nature. In the ſoul where Chriſt ſavingly *is*, there he *lives*. He does not only live *without* it, ſo as violently to actuate it, but he lives *in* it, ſo that that alſo is alive. Grace in the ſoul is as much from Chriſt, as the light in a glaſs, held out in the ſun-beams, is from the ſun. But this repreſents the manner of the communication of grace to the ſoul, but in part; becauſe the glaſs remains as it was, the nature of it not being at all changed, it is as much without any lightſomeneſs in its nature as ever. But the ſoul of a ſaint receives light from the Sun of righteouſneſs, in ſuch a manner, that its nature is changed, and it becomes properly a luminous thing: not only does the ſun ſhine in the ſaints, but they alſo become little ſuns, partaking of the nature of the fountain of their light. In this reſpect, the manner of their derivation of light, is like that of the lamps in the tabernacle, rather than that of a reflecting glaſs; which though they were lit up by fire from heaven, yet thereby became themſelves burning ſhining things. The ſaints do not only drink of the water of life, that flows from the original fountain; but this water becomes a fountain of water in them, ſpringing up there, and flowing out of them, John iv. 14. and chap vii. 38, 39. Grace is compared to a ſeed implanted, that not only is in the ground, but has hold of it, has root there, and grows there, and is an abiding principle of life and nature there.

As it is with ſpiritual diſcoveries and affections given at firſt converſion, ſo it is in all illuminations and affections of that kind, that perſons are the ſubjects of afterwards; they are all

tranſforming.

transforming. There is a like divine power and energy in them, as in the firſt diſcoveries: and they ſtill reach the bottom of the heart, and affect and alter the very nature of the ſoul in proportion to the degree in which they are given. And a transformation of nature is continued and carried on by them to the end of life, until it is brought to perfection in glory. Hence the progreſs of the work of grace in the hearts of the ſaints, is repreſented in ſcripture, as a continued converſion and renovation of nature. So the apoſtle exhorts thoſe that were at Rome, *beloved of God, called to be ſaints*, and that were the ſubjects of God's redeeming *mercies*, to be *transformed by the renewing of their mind*, Rom. xii. 1, 2. "I beſeech you "therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your bo "dies a living ſacrifice;—and be not conformed to this world "but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Compared with chap. i. 7. So the apoſtle writing to the *ſaints and faithful in Chriſt Jeſus*, that were at Epheſus, (Eph. i. 1.) and thoſe who *were once dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, but were now *quickened, and raiſed up, and made to ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt, and created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, that were once far off, but were now made nigh by the blood of Chriſt, and that were no more ſtrangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſehold of God, and that were built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*; I ſay, the apoſtle writing to theſe, tells them, *that he ceaſed not to pray for them, that God would give them the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the knowlege of Chriſt; the eyes of their underſtanding being enlightened, that they might know*, or experience, *what was the exceeding greatneſs of God's power towards them that believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Chriſt, when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places*. Eph. i. 16. to the end. In this the apoſtle has reſpect to the glorious power and work of God in converting and renewing the ſoul; as is moſt plain by the ſequel. So the apoſtle exhorts the ſame perſons "to put off the old man, which is corrupt "according to the deceitful luſts; and be renewed in the ſpirit "of their minds; and put on the new man, which after God "is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs." Eph. iv. 22, 23, 24.

There is a ſort of high affections that ſome have from time to time, that leave them without any manner of appearance of

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an abiding effect. They go off ſuddenly; ſo that from the very height of their emotion, and ſeeming rapture, they paſs at once to be quite dead, and void of all ſenſe and activity. It ſurely is not wont to be thus with high gracious affections; † they leave a ſweet ſavour and reliſh of divine things on the heart, and a ſtronger bent of ſoul towards God and holineſs. As Moſes's face not only ſhone while he was in the mount, extraordinarily converſing with God, but it continued to ſhine after he came down from the mount. When men have been converſing with Chriſt in an extraordinary manner, there is a ſenſible effect of it remains upon them; there is ſomething remarkable in their diſpoſition and frame, which if we take knowlege of, and trace to its cauſe, we ſhall find it is becauſe they have been with Jeſus, Acts iv. 13.

VIII. Truly gracious affections differ from thoſe affections that are falſe and deluſive, in that they tend *to*, and are attended *with* the lamb-like, dove-like ſpirit and temper of Jeſus Chriſt; or in other words, they naturally beget and promote ſuch a ſpirit of love, meekneſs, quietneſs, forgiveneſs and mercy, as appeared in Chriſt.

The evidence of this in the ſcripture is very abundant. If we judge of the nature of Chriſtianity, and the proper ſpirit of the goſpel, by the word of God, this ſpirit is what may, by way of eminency, be called *the Chriſtian ſpirit*; and may be looked upon as the true, and diſtinguiſhing diſpoſition of the hearts of Chriſtians, as Chriſtians. When ſome of the diſciples of Chriſt ſaid ſomething, through inconſideration and infirmity, that was not agreeable to ſuch a ſpirit, Chriſt told them that "they knew not what manner of ſpirit they were of," Luke ix. 55. implying, that this ſpirit that I am ſpeaking of, is the proper ſpirit of his religion and kingdom. All that are truly godly, and real diſciples of Chriſt, have this ſpirit in them; and not only ſo, but they *are of* this ſpirit; it is the ſpirit by which they are ſo poſſeſſed and governed, that it is their true and proper character. This is evident by what the wiſe man ſays, Prov. xvii. 27. (having reſpect plainly to ſuch a ſpirit as this,) "A man of underſtanding is of an excellent ſpirit;" and by the particular

† "Do you think the Holy Ghoſt comes on a man, as on Balaam, by immediate acting, and then leaves him, and then he has nothing?" *Shepard's Parable*, Part I, p. 126.

particular deſcription Chriſt gives of the qualities and temp
of ſuch as are truly bleſſed, that ſhall obtain mercy, and a
God's children and heirs, Matth. v. "Bleſſed are the meek: f
"they ſhall inherit the earth. Bleſſed are the merciful: for th
"ſhall obtain mercy. Bleſſed are the peace-makers: for th
"ſhall be called the children of God." And that this ſpirit
the ſpecial character of the elect of God, is manifeſt by Col. i
12, 13. "Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and b
"loved, bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of min
"meekneſs, long-ſuffering; forbearing one another, and fo
"giving one another." And the apoſtle ſpeaking of that ten
per and diſpoſition, which he ſpeaks of as the moſt excelle
and eſſential thing in Chriſtianity, and *that* without whi
none are true Chriſtians, and the moſt glorious profeſſion a
gifts are nothing, (calling this ſpirit by the name of charity
he deſcribes it thus; (1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5.) "Charity ſuffere
"long, and is kind; charity envieth not: charity vaunte
"not itſelf, is not puffed up, doth not behave itſelf unſeeml
"ſeeketh not her own, is not eaſily provoked, thinketh
"evil." And the ſame apoſtle, Gal. v. deſignedly declari
the diſtinguiſhing marks and fruits of true Chriſtian grac
chiefly inſiſts on the things that appertain to ſuch a temper a
ſpirit as I am ſpeaking of, verſ. 22, 23. "The fruit of t
"Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goo
"neſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance." And ſo does the ap
ſtle James, in deſcribing true grace, or *that wiſdom that is fr
above*, with that declared deſign, that others who are of a co
trary ſpirit may not deceive themſelves, and lie againſt the tru
in profeſſing to be Chriſtians, when they are not, James i
14—17. "If ye have bitter envying and ſtrife in your hear
"glory not, and lie not againſt the truth. This wiſdom d
"ſcendeth not from above, but is earthly, ſenſual, devili
"For where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, a
"every evil work. But the wiſdom that is from above, is fi
"pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be intreated, f
"of mercy and good fruits."

Every thing that appertains to holineſs of heart, does inde
belong to the nature of true Chriſtianity, and the character
Chriſtians; but a ſpirit of holineſs as appearing in ſome par
cular graces, may more eſpecially be called the Chriſtian ſpi
or temper. There are ſome amiable qualities and virtues, th
do more eſpecially agree with the nature of the goſpel conſtit

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tion, and Chriſtian profeſſion; becauſe there is a ſpecial agreeableneſs in them, with thoſe divine attributes which God has more remarkably manifeſted and glorified in the work of redemption by Jeſus Chriſt, that is the grand ſubject of the Chriſtian revelation; and alſo a ſpecial agreeableneſs with thoſe virtues that were ſo wonderfully exerciſed by Jeſus Chriſt towards us in that affair, and the bleſſed example he hath therein ſet us; and likewiſe becauſe they are peculiarly agreeable to the ſpecial drift and deſign of the work of redemption, and the benefits we thereby receive, and the relation that it brings us into, to God and one another. And theſe virtues are ſuch as humility, meekneſs, love, forgiveneſs, and mercy. Theſe things therefore eſpecially belong to the character of Chriſtians, as ſuch.

Theſe things are ſpoken of as what are eſpecially the character of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, the great head of the Chriſtian church. They are ſo ſpoken of in the prophecies of the Old Teſtament; as in that cited Matth. xxi. 5. "Tell ye the daugh-
" ter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and
" ſitting upon an aſs, and a colt the foſe of an aſs." So Chriſt himſelf ſpeaks of them, Matth. xi. 29. "Learn of me, for I
" am meek and lowly in heart." The ſame appears by the name by which Chriſt is ſo often called in ſcripture, *viz*, THE LAMB. And as theſe things are eſpecially the character of Chriſt; ſo they are alſo eſpecially the character of Chriſtians. Chriſtians are Chriſtlike: none deſerve the name of Chriſtians, that are not ſo in their prevailing character. "The new
" man is renewed, after the image of him that creates him," Col. iii. 10. All true Chriſtians "behold as in a glaſs the glory
" of the Lord, and are changed into the ſame image, by his Spirit," 2 Cor. iii. 18. The elect are all "predeſtinated to be con-
" formed to the image of the Son of God, that he might be
" the firſt-born among many brethren," Rom. viii. 29. "As
" we have borne the image of the firſt man, that is earthly, ſo
" we muſt alſo bear the image of the heavenly: for as is the
" earthly, ſuch are they alſo that are earthly; and as is the
" heavenly, ſuch are they alſo that are heavenly," 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48, 49. Chriſt is full of grace; and Chriſtians all receive of his fulneſs, and grace for grace; *i. e.* there is grace in Chriſtians anſwering to grace in Chriſt, ſuch an anſwerableneſs as there is between the wax and the ſeal; there is character for character: ſuch kind of graces, ſuch a ſpirit and temper, the

ſame things that belong to Chriſt's character, belongs to theirs. That diſpoſition wherein Chriſt's character does in a ſpecial manner conſiſt, therein does his image in a ſpecial manner conſiſt. Chriſtians that ſhine by reflecting the light of the Son of righteouſneſs, do ſhine with the ſame ſort of brightneſs, the ſame mild, ſweet and pleaſant beams. Theſe lamps of the ſpiritual temple, that are enkindled by fire from heaven, burn with the ſame ſort of flame. The branch is of the ſame nature with the ſtock and root, has the ſame ſap, and bears the ſame ſort of fruit. The members have the ſame kind of life with the head. It would be ſtrange if Chriſtians ſhould not be of the ſame temper and ſpirit that Chriſt is of; when they are *his fleſh and his bone*, yea, are *one ſpirit*, 1 Cor. vi. 17. and live ſo, that it is *not they that live, but Chriſt that lives in them*. A Chriſtian ſpirit is Chriſt's mark, that he ſets upon the ſouls of his people; his ſeal in their foreheads, bearing his image and ſuperſcription. Chriſtians are the followers of Chriſt: and they are ſo, as they are obedient to that call of Chriſt, Matth. xi. 28, 29. "Come to me, and learn of me, for I am meek and "lowly of heart." They follow him as the Lamb; Rev. xiv. 4. "Theſe are they which follow the Lamb whitherſoever he "goeth." True Chriſtians are as it were clothed with the meek, quiet, and loving temper of Chriſt; for *as many as are in Chriſt, have put on Chriſt*. And in this reſpect *the church is clothed with the ſun*, not only by being clothed with his imputed righteouſneſs, but alſo by being adorned with his graces, Rom. xiii. 14. Chriſt the great Shepherd, is himſelf a lamb, and believers are alſo lambs; all the flock are lambs; John xxi. 15, "Feed my lambs." Luke x. 3. "I ſend you forth as "lambs in the midſt of wolves." The redemption of the church by Chriſt from the power of the devil, was typified of old, by David's delivering the *lamb* out of the mouth of the lion and the bear.

That ſuch manner of virtue as has been ſpoken of, is the very nature of the Chriſtian ſpirit, or the ſpirit that worketh in Chriſt and in his members, and the diſtinguiſhing nature of it, is evident by this, that *the dove* is the very ſymbol or emblem, choſen of God, to repreſent it. Thoſe things are fitteſt emblems of other things, which do beſt repreſent *that* which is moſt diſtinguiſhing in their nature. The Spirit that deſcended on Chriſt, when he was anointed of the Father, deſcended on him *like a dove*. The dove is a noted emblem of meekneſs,

harmleſſneſs,

harmleſſneſs, peace, and love. But the ſame Spirit that deſcended on the head of the church, deſcends to the members. "God "hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts," Gal. iv. 6. And "if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is "none of his," Rom. viii. 9. There is but one Spirit to the whole myſtical body, head and members, 1 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. iv. 4. Chriſt breathes his own Spirit on his diſciples, John xx. 22. As Chriſt was anointed with the Holy Ghoſt, deſcending on him like a dove, ſo Chriſtians alſo "have an anointing "from the holy One," 1 John ii. 20, 27. And they are anointed with the ſame oil; it is the ſame *precious ointment on the head, that goes down to the ſkirts of the garments.* And on both it is a ſpirit of peace and love: Pſal. cxxxiii. 1, 2. "Be- "hold, how good and how pleaſant it is, for brethren, to dwell "together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the "head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, "that went down to the ſkirts of his garments." The oil on Aaron's garments, had the ſame ſweet and inimitable odour, with that on his head; the ſmell of the ſame ſweet ſpices. Chriſtian affections and a Chriſtian behaviour, is but the flowing out of the ſavour of Chriſt's ſweet ointments. Becauſe the church has a dove-like temper and diſpoſition, therefore it is ſaid of her that ſhe has doves eyes, Cant. i. 15. "Behold, "thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair, thou haſt doves "eyes." And chap. iv. 1. "Behold, thou art fair, my love, "behold, thou art fair, thou haſt doves eyes within thy locks." The ſame that is ſaid of Chriſt, chap. vi. 12. "His eyes are as "the eyes of doves." And the church is frequently compared to a dove in ſcripture, Cant. ii. 14. "O my dove, that art in "the clefts of the rock."—Chap. v. 2. "Open to me, my "love, my dove." And Chap. vi. 9. "My dove, my unde- "filed is but one." Pſal. lxviii. 13. "Ye ſhall be as the wings "of a dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow "gold." And lxxiv. 19. "O deliver not the ſoul of thy "turtle-dove unto the multitude of the wicked." The dove that Noah ſent out of the ark, that could find no reſt for the ſole of her foot, until ſhe returned, was a type of a true ſaint.

Meekneſs is ſo much the character of the ſaints, that *the meek* and *the godly*, are uſed as ſynonymous terms in ſcripture: ſo Pſal. xxxvii. 10, 11. the wicked and the meek are ſet in oppoſition one to another, as wicked and godly, "Yet a little while and the "wicked ſhall not be:—but the meek ſhall inherit the earth."

So

So Pſal. cxlvii. 6. " The Lord liſteth up the meek : he caſt-
" eth the wicked down to the ground."

It is doubtleſs very much on this account, that Chriſt repreſents all his diſciples, all the heirs of heaven, as little children, Matth. xix. 14. " Suffer little children to come unto me,
" and forbid them not ; for of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven."
Matth. x. 42. " Whoſoever ſhall give to drink unto one of
" theſe little ones, a cup of cold water, in the name of a diſci-
" ple, verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall in no wiſe loſe his re-
" ward." Matth. xviii. 6. " Whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe
" little ones, &c." verſ. 10. " Take heed that ye deſpiſe not
" one of theſe little ones." Verſ. 14. " It is not the will of
" your Father which is in heaven, that one of theſe little ones
" ſhould periſh." John xiii. 33. " Little children, yet a little
" while I am with you." Little children are innocent and harmleſs ; they do not do a great deal of miſchief in the world ; men need not be afraid of them ; they are no dangerous ſort of perſons ; their anger does not laſt long, they do not lay up injuries in high reſentment, entertaining deep and rooted malice. So Chriſtians, in malice, are children, 1 Cor. xiv. 20. Little children are not guileful and deceitful, but plain and ſimple ; they are not verſed in the arts of fiction and deceit ; and are ſtrangers to artful diſguiſes. They are yieldable and flexible, and not wilful and obſtinate ; do not truſt to their own underſtanding, but rely on the inſtructions of parents, and others of ſuperior underſtanding. Here is therefore a fit and lively emblem of the followers of the Lamb. Perſons being thus like little children, is not only a thing highly commendable, and what Chriſtians approve of, and aim at, and which ſome of extraordinary proficiency do attain to ; but it is their univerſal character, and abſolutely neceſſary in order to entering into the kingdom of heaven ; unleſs Chriſt was miſtaken, Matth. xviii. 3. " Verily I ſay unto you, Except ye be con-
" verted, and become as little children, ye ſhall not enter into
" the kingdom of heaven." Mark x. 15. " Verily I ſay unto
" you, Whoſoever ſhall not receive the kingdom of God as a
" little child, he ſhall not enter therein."

But here ſome may be ready to ſay, Is there no ſuch thing as Chriſtian fortitude, and boldneſs for Chriſt, being good ſoldiers in the Chriſtian warfare, and coming out bold againſt the enemies of Chriſt and his people ?

To

To which I anſwer, there doubtleſs is ſuch a thing. The whole Chriſtian life is compared to a warfare, and fitly ſo. And the moſt eminent Chriſtians are the beſt ſoldiers, endued with the greateſt degrees of Chriſtian fortitude. And it is the duty of God's people to be ſtedfaſt, and vigorous in their oppoſition to the deſigns and ways of ſuch as are endeavoring to overthrow the kingdom of Chriſt, and the intereſt of religion. But yet many perſons ſeem to be quite miſtaken concerning the nature of Chriſtian fortitude. It is an exceeding diverſe thing from a brutal fierceneſs, or the boldneſs of beaſts of prey. True Chriſtian fortitude conſiſts in ſtrength of mind, through grace, exerted in two things; in ruling and ſuppreſſing the *evil*, and unruly paſſions and affections of the mind; and in ſtedfaſtly and freely exerting, and following *good* affections and diſpoſitions, without being hindered by ſinful fear, or the oppoſition of enemies. But the paſſions that are reſtrained and kept under, in the exerciſe of this Chriſtian ſtrength and fortitude, are thoſe very paſſions that are vigorouſly and violently exerted in a falſe boldneſs for Chriſt. And thoſe affections that are vigorouſly exerted in true fortitude, are thoſe Chriſtian holy affections, that are directly contrary to them. Though Chriſtian fortitude appears, in withſtanding and counteracting the enemies that are without us; yet it much more appears, in reſiſting and ſuppreſſing the enemies that are within us; becauſe they are our worſt and ſtrongeſt enemies, and have greateſt advantage againſt us. The ſtrength of the good ſoldier of Jeſus Chriſt, appears in nothing more, than in ſtedfaſtly maintaining the holy calm, meekneſs, ſweetneſs, and benevolence of his mind, amidſt all the ſtorms, injuries, ſtrange behaviour, and ſurpriſing acts and events of this evil and unreaſonable world. The ſcripture ſeems to intimate that true fortitude conſiſts chiefly in this, Prov. xvi. 32. "He that is ſlow "to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his "ſpirit, than he that taketh a city."

The directeſt and ſureſt way in the world, to make a right judgment, what a holy fortitude is, in fighting with God's enemies, is to look to the Captain of all God's hoſts, and our great leader and example, and ſee wherein his fortitude and valour appeared, in his chief conflict, and in the time of the greateſt battle that ever was, or ever will be fought with theſe enemies, when he fought with them all alone, and of the people there was none with him, and exerciſed his fortitude in the higheſt degree that ever he did, and got that glorious victory

that

that will be celebrated in the praiſes and triumphs of all th
hoſts of heaven, throughout all eternity; even to Jeſus Chri
in the time of his laſt ſufferings, when his enemies in ear
and hell made their moſt violent attack upon him, compaſſin
him round on every ſide, like renting and roaring lions.—
Doubtleſs here we ſhall ſee the fortitude of a holy warrior an
champion in the cauſe of God, in its higheſt perfection an
greateſt luſtre, and an example fit for the ſoldiers to follow
that fight under this Captain. But how did he ſhow his ho
boldneſs and valour at that time? not in the exerciſe of any fie
paſſions; not in fierce and violent ſpeeches, and vehement
declaiming againſt, and crying out of the intolerable wicke
neſs of oppoſers, giving them their own in plain terms; b
in not opening his mouth when afflicted and oppreſſed, in go
ing as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before his ſhearer
is dumb, not opening his mouth; praying that the Fathe
would forgive his cruel enemies, becauſe they knew not wh
they did; not ſhedding others blood, but with all-conquerin
patience and love, ſhedding his own. Indeed one of his diſc
ples, that made a forward pretence to *boldneſs for Chriſt*, an
confidently declared he would ſooner die with Chriſt than den
him, began to lay about him with a ſword: but Chriſt meekl
rebukes him, and heals the wound he gives. And never wa
the patience, meekneſs, love, and forgiveneſs of Chriſt, in ſ
glorious a manifeſtation, as at that time. Never did he appea
ſo much a *Lamb*, and never did he ſhow ſo much of the *dov*
like ſpirit, as at that time. If therefore we ſee any of the fo
lowers of Chriſt, in the midſt of the moſt violent, unreaſonabl
and wicked oppoſition of God's and his own enemies, main
taining under all this temptation, the humility, quietneſs, an
gentleneſs of a lamb, and the harmleſſneſs and love, an
ſweetneſs of a dove, we may well judge that here is a good ſo
dier of Jeſus Chriſt.

When perſons are fierce and violent, and exert their ſhar
and bitter paſſions, it ſhows weakneſs, inſtead of ſtrength an
fortitude. 1 Cor. iii. at the beginning, "And I, brethren, coul
"not ſpeak unto you as unto ſpiritual, but as unto carna
"even as unto babes in Chriſt.—For ye are yet carnal: fo
"whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſion
"are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

There is a pretended boldneſs for Chriſt that ariſes from n
better principle than pride. A man may be forward to expo

himſelf

himſelf to the diſlike of the world, and even to provoke their diſpleaſure, out of pride. For it is the nature of ſpiritual pride to cauſe men to ſeek diſtinction and ſingularity; and ſo oftentimes to ſet themſelves at war with thoſe that they call carnal, that they may be more highly exalted among their party. True boldneſs for Chriſt is univerſal, and overcomes all, and carries men above the diſpleaſure of friends and foes; ſo that they will forſake all rather than Chriſt; and will rather offend all parties, and be thought meanly of by all, than offend Chriſt. And that duty which tries whether a man is willing to be deſpiſed by them that are of his own party, and thought the leaſt worthy to be regarded by them, is a much more proper trial of his boldneſs for Chriſt, than his being forward to expoſe himſelf to the reproach of oppoſers. The apoſtle ſought not glory, not only of Heathens and Jews, but of Chriſtians; as he declares, 1 Theſſ. ii. 6.* He is bold for Chriſt, that has Chriſtian fortitude enough, to confeſs his fault openly, when he has committed one that requires it, and as it were to come down upon his knees before oppoſers. Such things as theſe are a vaſtly greater evidence of holy boldneſs, than reſolutely and fiercely confronting oppoſers.

As ſome are much miſtaken concerning the nature of true *boldneſs* for Chriſt, ſo they are concerning Chriſtian *zeal*. It is indeed a flame, but a ſweet one; or rather it is the heat and fervour of a ſweet flame. For the flame of which it is the heat, is no other than that of divine love, or Chriſtian charity; which is the ſweeteſt and moſt benevolent thing that is, or can be, in the heart of man or angel. Zeal is the fervour of this flame, as it ardently and vigorouſly goes out towards the good that is its object, in deſires of it, and purſuit after it; and ſo conſequentially, in oppoſition to the evil that is contrary to it, and impedes it. There is indeed oppoſition, and vigorous oppoſition, that is a part of it, or rather is an attendant of it; but it is againſt *things*, and not *perſons*. Bitterneſs againſt the *perſons* of men is no part of it, but is very contrary to it; inſomuch that ſo much the warmer true zeal is, and the higher it is raiſed, ſo much the further are perſons from ſuch bitterneſs, and ſo much fuller

* Mr. Shepard, ſpeaking of hypocrites affecting applauſe, ſays, "Hence men forſake their friends, and trample under foot the ſcorns of the world they have credit elſewhere. To maintain their intereſt in the love of godly men, they will ſuffer much." *Parable of the ten virgins*, P. I. p. 180.

fuller of love, both to the evil and to the good. As appears from what has been juſt now obſerved, that it is no other, in its very nature and eſſence, than the fervour of a ſpirit of Chriſtian love. And as to what oppoſition there is in it, to *things* it is firſtly and chiefly againſt the *evil things* in the perſon himſelf, who has this zeal; againſt the enemies of God and holineſs, that are in his own heart; (as theſe are moſt in his view, and what he is moſt to do with;) and but ſecondarily againſt the ſins of others. And therefore there is nothing in a true Chriſtian zeal, that is contrary to that ſpirit of meekneſs, gentleneſs, and love, that ſpirit of a little child, a lamb and dove, that has been ſpoken of; but it is entirely agreeable to it, and tends to promote it.

But to ſay ſomething particularly concerning this Chriſtian ſpirit I have been ſpeaking of, as exerciſed in theſe three things, *forgiveneſs*, *love*, and *mercy*; I would obſerve that the ſcripture is very clear and expreſs concerning the abſolute neceſſity of each of theſe, as belonging to the temper and character of every Chriſtian.

It is ſo as to a *forgiving ſpirit*, or a diſpoſition to overlook and forgive injuries. Chriſt gives it to us both as a negative and poſitive evidence; and is expreſs in teaching us, that if we are of ſuch a ſpirit, it is a ſign we are in a ſtate of forgiveneſs and favor ourſelves; and that if we are not of ſuch a ſpirit, we are not forgiven of God; and ſeems to take ſpecial care that we ſhould take good notice of it, and always bear it on our minds. Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15. "Forgive us our debts, as we "forgive our debtors.—For, if ye forgive men their treſpaſſes, "your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you. But if ye forgive "not men their treſpaſſes, neither will your Father forgive your "treſpaſſes." Chriſt expreſſes the ſame again at another time, Mark xi. 25, 26. and again in Matt. xviii. 22. to the end, in the parable of the ſervant that owed his lord ten thouſand talents, that would not forgive his fellow ſervant an hundred pence; and therefore was delivered to the tormentors. In the application of the parable Chriſt ſays, verſ. 35. "So likewiſe "ſhall my heavenly Father do, if ye from your hearts forgive "not every one his brother their treſpaſſes."

And that all true ſaints are of a *loving*, benevolent and beneficent temper, the ſcripture is very plain and abundant. Without it the apoſtle tells us, though we ſhould ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels, we are as a ſounding braſs, or

a tinkling

a tinkling cymbal: and that though we have the gift of prophecy, and underſtand all myſteries, and all knowlege; yet without this ſpirit we are nothing. And there is no one virtue or diſpoſition of the mind, that is ſo often, and ſo expreſſly, inſiſted on, in the marks that are laid down in the New Teſtament, whereby to know true Chriſtians. It is often given as a ſign that is peculiarly diſtinguiſhing, by which all may know Chriſt's diſciples, and by which they may know themſelves; and is often laid down, both as a negative and poſitive evidence. Chriſt calls the law of love, by way of eminency, *his commandment*, John xiii. 34. "A new commandment I give "unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that "ye alſo love one another." And chap. xv. 12. "This is my "commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved "you." And verſ. 17. "Theſe things I command you, that "ye love one another." And ſays, chap. xiii. 35. "By this "ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love "one to another." And chap. xiv. 21. (ſtill with a ſpecial reference to this which he calls *his* commandment,) "He that "hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that "loveth me." The beloved diſciple, who had ſo much of this ſweet temper himſelf, abundantly inſiſts on it, in his epiſtles. There is none of the apoſtles, is ſo much in laying down expreſs ſigns of grace, for profeſſors to try themſelves by, as he; and in his ſigns, he inſiſts ſcarcely on any thing elſe, but a ſpirit of Chriſtian love, and an agreeable practice; 1 John ii. 9, 10. "He that ſaith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in "darkneſs even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occaſion of ſtumbling in him." Chap. iii. 14. "We know that we are paſſed from death unto "life, becauſe we love the brethren: he that loveth not his bro-"ther, abideth in death." verſ. 18, 19. "My little children, "let us not love in word and in tongue, but in deed, and in "truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and "ſhall aſſure our hearts before him." verſ. 23, 24. "This is "his commandment, that we ſhould love one another. And "he that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he "in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the "Spirit which he hath given us." Chap. iv. 7, 8. "Beloved, "let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one "that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that "loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." verſ. 12, 13. "No man hath ſeen God at any time. If we love one another,

" God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby " know we that we dwell in him, becauſe he hath given us of his " Spirit." verſ. 16. " God is love; and he that dwelleth in " love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." verſ. 20. " If a " man ſay, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for " he that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he " love God whom he hath not ſeen?"

And the ſcripture is as plain as it is poſſible it ſhould be, that none are true ſaints, but thoſe whoſe true character it is, that they are of a diſpoſition to *pity* and *relieve* their fellow-creatures, that are poor, indigent, and afflicted; Pſal. xxxvii. 21. " The righteous ſheweth mercy, and giveth." verſ. 26. " He is ever merciful, and lendeth." Pſal. cxii. 5. " A good " man ſheweth favour, and lendeth." verſ. 9. " He hath diſ-" perſed abroad, and given to the poor." Prov. xiv. 31. " He " that honoureth God, hath mercy on the poor." Prov. xxi 26. " The righteous giveth, and ſpareth not." Jer. xxii. 16. " He judged the cauſe of the poor and needy, then it was well " with him: was not this to know me? ſaith the Lord." Jam. i. 27. " Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, " To viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction," *&c.* Hoſ. vi. 6. " For I deſired mercy, and not ſacrifice; and the " knowlege of God, more than burnt-offerings." Matth. v. 7. " Bleſſed are the merciful: for they ſhall obtain mercy." 2 Cor viii. 8. " I ſpeak not by commandment, but by occa-" ſion of the forwardneſs of others, and to prove the ſincerity " of your love." Jam. ii. 13—16. " For he ſhall have judg-" ment without mercy, that hath ſhewed no mercy.—— What " doth it profit, my brethren, though a man ſay he hath faith, " and have not works? can faith ſave him? If a brother or " ſiſter be naked, and deſtitute of daily food; and one of you " ſay unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled: " notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things which are " needful to the body; what doth it profit?" 1 John iii. 17. " Whoſo hath this world's good, and ſeeth his brother have " need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, " how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Chriſt in that de-ſcription he gives us of the day of judgment, Matth. xxv. (which is the moſt particular that we have in all the Bible,) repreſents, that judgment will be paſſed at that day, according as men have been found to have been of a merciful ſpirit and practice, or otherwiſe. Chriſt's deſign in giving ſuch a deſcrip-

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tion of the proceſs of that day, is plainly to poſſeſs all his followers with that apprehenſion, that unleſs this was their ſpirit and practice, there was no hope of their being accepted and owned by him, at that day. Therefore this is an apprehenſion that we ought to be poſſeſſed with. We find in ſcripture, that a *righteous man*, and a *merciful man* are ſynonymous expreſſions; Iſ. lvii. 1. "The *righteous* periſheth, and no man "layeth it to heart; and *merciful men* are taken away, none "conſidering that the *righteous* is taken away from the evil to "come."

Thus we ſee how full, clear, and abundant, the evidence from ſcripture is, that thoſe who are truly gracious, are under the government of that lamb-like, dove-like Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt, and that this is eſſentially and eminently the nature of the ſaving grace of the goſpel, and the proper ſpirit of true Chriſtianity. We may therefore undoubtedly determine, that all truly Chriſtian affections are attended with ſuch a ſpirit; and that this is the natural tendency of the fear and hope, the ſorrow and the joy, the confidence and the zeal of true Chriſtians.

None will underſtand me, that true Chriſtians have no remains of a contrary ſpirit, and can never, in any inſtances, be guilty of a behaviour diſagreeable to ſuch a ſpirit. But this I affirm, and ſhall affirm, until I deny the Bible to be any thing worth, that every thing in Chriſtians that belongs to true Chriſtianity, is of this tendency, and works this way; and that there is no true Chriſtian upon earth, but is ſo under the prevailing power of ſuch a ſpirit, that he is properly denominated from it, and it is truly and juſtly his character: and that therefore miniſters, and others, have no warrant from Chriſt to encourage perſons, that are of a contrary character and behaviour, to think they are converted, becauſe they tell a fair ſtory of illuminations and diſcoveries. In ſo doing, they would ſet up their own wiſdom againſt Chriſt's, and judge without, and againſt that rule by which Chriſt has declared all men ſhould know his diſciples. Some perſons place religion ſo much in certain tranſient illuminations and impreſſions, (eſpecially if they are in ſuch a particular method and order,) and ſo little in the ſpirit and temper perſons are of, that they greatly deform religion, and form notions of Chriſtianity quite different from what it is, as delineated in the ſcriptures. The ſcripture knows

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of no ſuch true Chriſtians, as are of a ſordid, ſelfiſh, croſs and contentious ſpirit. Nothing can be invented th.. is a greater abſurdity, than a moroſe, hard, cloſe, high-ſpirited, ſpiteful, true Chriſtian. We muſt learn the way of bringing men to rules, and not rules to men, and ſo ſtrain and ſtretch the rules of God's word, to take in ourſelves, and ſome of our neighbours, until we make them wholly of none effect.

It is true, that allowances muſt be made for mens natural temper, with regard to theſe things, as well as others; but not ſuch allowances, as to allow men, that once were wolves and ſerpents, to be now converted, without any remarkable change in the ſpirit of their mind. The change made by true converſion, is wont to be moſt remarkable and ſenſible, with reſpect to that which before was the wickedneſs the perſon was moſt notoriouſly guilty of. Grace has as great a tendency to reſtrain and mortify ſuch ſins, as are contrary to the ſpirit that has been ſpoken of, as it has to mortify drunkenneſs or laſciviouſneſs. Yea, the ſcripture repreſents the change wrought by goſpel-grace, as eſpecially appearing in an alteration of the former ſort; Iſ. xi. 6—9. "The wolf ſhall dwell with the lamb
" and the leopard ſhall lie down with the kid: and the calf, and
" the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child
" ſhall lead them. And the cow and the bear ſhall feed, their
" young ones ſhall lie down together: and the lion ſhall eat
" ſtraw like the ox. And the ſucking child ſhall play on the
" hole of the aſp, and the weaned child ſhall put his hand on
" the cockatrice-den. They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all
" my holy mountain: for the earth ſhall be full of the know-
" lege of the Lord, as the waters cover the ſea." And to the ſame purpoſe is Iſ. lxv. 25. Accordingly we find, that in the primitive times of the Chriſtian church, converts were remarkably changed in this reſpect: Tit. iii. 3, &c. "For we our-
" ſelves alſo were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived,
" ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice and envy,
" hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kind-
" neſs and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,—
" he ſaved us by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of
" the Holy Ghoſt." And Col. iii. 7, 8. "In the which ye
" alſo walked ſome time, when ye lived in them. But now
" you alſo put off all theſe; anger, wrath, malice, blaſphemy,
" filthy communication out of your mouth."

IX. Gracious

IX. Gracious affections ſoften the heart, and are attended and followed with a Chriſtian tenderneſs of ſpirit.

Falſe affections, however perſons may ſeem to be melted by them while they are new, yet have a tendency in the end to harden the heart. A diſpoſition to ſome kind of paſſions may be eſtabliſhed; ſuch as imply ſelf-ſeeking, ſelf-exaltation, and oppoſition to others. But falſe affections with the deluſion that attends them, finally tend to ſtupify the mind, and ſhut it up againſt thoſe affections wherein tenderneſs of heart conſiſts: and the effect of them at laſt is, that perſons in the ſettled frame of their minds, become leſs affected with their preſent and paſt ſins, and leſs conſcientious with reſpect to future ſins, leſs moved with the warnings and cautions of God's word, or God's chaſtiſements in his providence, more careleſs of the frame of their hearts, and the manner and tendency of their behaviour, leſs quick-ſighted to diſcern what is ſinful, leſs afraid of the appearance of evil, than they were while they were under legal awakenings and fears of hell. Now they have been the ſubjects of ſuch and ſuch impreſſions and affections, and have a high opinion of themſelves, and look on their ſtate to be ſafe; they can be much more eaſy than before, in living in the neglect of duties that are troubleſome and inconvenient; and are much more ſlow and partial in complying with difficult commands; are in no meaſure ſo alarmed at the appearance of their own defects and tranſgreſſions; are emboldened to favor themſelves more, with reſpect to the labour, and painful care and exactneſs in their walk, and more eaſily yield to temptations, and the ſolicitations of ther luſts; and have far leſs care of their behaviour, when they come into the holy preſence of God, in the time of public or private worſhip. Formerly it may be, under legal convictions, they took much pains in religion, and denied themſelves in many things: but now they think themſelves out of danger of hell, they very much put off the burden of the croſs, and ſave themſelves the trouble of difficult duties, and allow themſelves more of the comfort of the enjoyment of their eaſe and their luſts.

Such perſons as theſe, inſtead of embracing Chriſt as their *Saviour from ſin*, they truſt in him as the *ſaviour of their ſins*: inſtead of flying to him as their refuge *from their ſpiritual enemies*, they make uſe of him as the defence *of their ſpiritual enemies, from God*, and to ſtrengthen them againſt him. They

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make Chriſt the miniſter of ſin, and great officer and vicegerent of the devil, to ſtrengthen his intereſt, and make him above all things in the world ſtrong againſt JEHOVAH; ſo that they may ſin againſt him with good courage, and without any fear, being effectually ſecured from reſtraints by his moſt ſolemn warnings and moſt awful threatenings. They truſt in Chriſt to preſerve to them the quiet enjoyment of their ſins, and to be their ſhield to defend them from God's diſpleaſure; while they come cloſe to him, even to his boſom, the place of his children, to fight againſt him, with their mortal weapons, hid under their ſkirts.* However, ſome of theſe, at the ſame time

* "Theſe are hypocrites that believe, but fail in regard of the uſe of the goſpel, and of the Lord Jeſus. And theſe we read of, Jude 3. viz. of ſome men *that did turn grace into wantoneſs*. For therein appears the exceeding evil of a man's heart, that not only the law, but alſo the glorious goſpel of the Lord Jeſus, works in him all manner of unrighteouſneſs. And it is too common for men at the firſt work of converſion, Oh then to cry for grace and Chriſt, and afterwards grow licentious, live and lie in the breach of the law, and take their warrant for their courſe from the goſpel," *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 126.

Again, p. 232. Mr. Shepard ſpeaks of ſuch hypocrites as thoſe, "who, like ſtrange eggs, being put into the ſame neſt, where honeſt men have lived, they have been hatched up; and when they are young, keep their neſt, and live by crying and opening their mouths wide after the Lord, and the food of his word; but when their wings are grown, and they have got ſome affections, ſome knowlege, ſome hope of mercy, are hardened thereby to fly from God." And adds, "Can that man be good, whom God's grace makes worſe?"

Again, Part II. p. 167. "When men fly to Chriſt in times of peace, that ſo they may preſerve their ſins with greater peace of conſcience; ſo that ſin makes them fly to Chriſt, as well as miſery; not that they may deſtroy and aboliſh ſin, but that they may be preſerved in their ſins with peace; then men may be ſaid to apprehend Chriſt only by a ſeeming faith.—Many an heart ſecretly ſaith this, If I can have my ſin, and peace, and conſcience quiet for the preſent, and God merciful to pardon it afterward; hence he doth rely (as he ſaith) only on the mercy of God in Chriſt: and now this hardens and blinds him, and makes him ſecure, and his faith is ſermon proof, nothing ſtirs him.—And were it not for their faith they ſhould deſpair, but this keeps them up. And now they think if they have any trouble of mind, the devil troubles them; and ſo make Chriſt and faith protectors of ſin, not purifiers from ſin; which is moſt dreadful; turning grace to wantonneſs, as they did ſacrifice. So theſe would ſin

time, make a great profeſſion of love to God, and aſſurance of his favour, and great joy in taſting the ſweetneſs of his love.

After this manner *they* truſted in Chriſt, that the apoſtle Jude ſpeaks of, who *crept in* among the ſaints *unknown*; but were really "ungodly men, turning the grace of God into la-"ſciviouſneſs," Jude 4. Theſe are they that truſt in their being righteous; and becauſe God has promiſed that *the righteous ſhall ſurely live*, or certainly be ſaved, are therefore emboldened to *commit iniquity*, whom God threatens in Ezek. xxxiii. 13. "When I ſhall ſay to the righteous, that he ſhall ſurely live: "if he truſt to his own righteouſneſs, and commit iniquity; "all his righteouſneſs ſhall not be remembered, but for his ini-"quity that he hath committed, he ſhall die for it."

Gracious affections are of a quite contrary tendency; they turn a heart of ſtone more and more into a heart of fleſh. An holy love and hope are principles that are vaſtly more efficacious upon the heart, to make it tender, and to fill it with a dread of ſin, or whatever might diſpleaſe and offend God, and to engage it to watchfulneſs, and care, and ſtrictneſs, than a ſlaviſh fear of hell. Gracious affections, as was obſerved before, flow out of a contrite heart, or (as the word ſignifies) a bruiſed heart, bruiſed and broken with godly ſorrow; which makes the heart tender, as bruiſed fleſh is tender, and eaſily hurt. Godly ſorrow has much greater influence to make the heart tender, than mere legal ſorrow from ſelfiſh principles.

The tenderneſs of the heart of a true Chriſtian, is elegantly ſignified by our Saviour, in his comparing ſuch a one to a little child. The fleſh of a little child is very tender: ſo is the heart of one that is new-born. This is repreſented in what we are told of Naaman's cure of his leproſy, by his waſhing in Jordan, by the direction of the prophet; which was undoubtedly a type of

ſin under the ſhadow of Chriſt, becauſe the ſhadow is good and ſweet, Mic. iii. 11. They had ſubtile ſly ends in good duties; for therein may lie a man's ſin: yet they lean upon the Lord.—When money-changers came into the temple. *You have made it a den of thieves.* Thieves when hunted fly to their den or cave, and there they are ſecure againſt all ſearchers, and hue-and-cries: ſo here. But Chriſt whipped them out. So when men are purſued with cries and fears of conſcience, away to Chriſt they go as to their den: not as ſaints, to pray and lament out the life of their ſin there: but to preſerve their ſin. This is vile; will the Lord receive ſuch?"

of the renewing of the ſoul, by waſhing in the laver of regeneration. We are told, 2 Kings v. 14. that "he went down, "and dipped himſelf ſeven times in Jordan, according to the "ſaying of the man of God; and his fleſh came again like "unto the fleſh of a little child." Not only is the fleſh of a little child tender, but his mind is tender. A little child has his heart eaſily moved, wrought upon and bowed: ſo is a Chriſtian in ſpiritual things. A little child is apt to be affected with ſympathy, to weep with them that weep, and cannot well bear to ſee others in diſtreſs: ſo it is with a Chriſtian; John xi. 35. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. A little child is eaſily won by kindneſs: ſo is a Chriſtian. A little child is eaſily affected with grief at temporal evils, and has his heart melted, and falls a-weeping: thus tender is the heart of a Chriſtian, with regard to the evil of ſin. A little child is eaſily affrighted at the appearance of outward evils, or any thing that threatens its hurt: ſo is a Chriſtian apt to be alarmed at the appearance of moral evil, and any thing that threatens the hurt of the ſoul. A little child, when it meets enemies, or fierce beaſts, is not apt to truſt its own ſtrength, but flies to its parents for refuge: ſo a ſaint is not ſelf-confident in engaging ſpiritual enemies, but flies to Chriſt. A little child is apt to be ſuſpicious of evil in places of danger, afraid in the dark, afraid when left alone, or far from home: ſo is a ſaint apt to be ſenſible of his ſpiritual dangers, jealous of himſelf, full of fear when he cannot ſee his way plain before him, afraid to be left alone, and to be at a diſtance from God; Prov. xxviii. 14. "Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth "his heart, ſhall fall into miſchief." A little child is apt to be afraid of ſuperiors, and to dread their anger, and tremble at their frowns and threatenings: ſo is a true ſaint with reſpect to God; Pſal. cxix. 120. "My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee "and I am afraid of thy judgments." Iſ. lxvi. 2. "To this "man will I look, even to him that is poor, and trembleth at "my word." verſ. 5. "Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye "that tremble at his word." Ezra. ix. 4. "Then were aſſem-"bled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the "God of Iſrael." chap. x. 3. "According to the counſel of "my lord, and of thoſe that tremble at the commandment of "our God." A little child approaches ſuperiors with awe: ſo do the ſaints approach God with holy awe and reverence; Job xiii. 11. "Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his

"dread

"dread fall upon you?" Holy fear is so much the nature of true godliness, that it is called in scripture by no other name more frequently, than the *fear of God.*

Hence gracious affections do not tend to make men bold, forward, noisy and boisterous; but rather to *speak, trembling*; Hos. xiii. 1. "When Ephraim spake, trembling, he exalted "himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died;" and to clothe with a kind of holy fear in all their behaviour towards God and man; agreeable to Psal. ii. 11. 1 Pet. iii. 15. 2 Cor. vii. 15. Eph. vi. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 2. Rom. xi. 20.

But here some may object and say, Is there no such thing as a holy boldness in prayer, and the duties of divine worship? I answer, there is doubtless such a thing; and it is chiefly to be found in eminent saints, persons of great degrees of faith and love. But this holy boldness is not in the least opposite to *reverence*; though it be to *disunion* and *servility*. It abolishes or lessens that disposition which arises from *moral distance* or *alienation*; and also *distance of relation*, as that of a slave: but not at all, that which becomes the *natural distance*, whereby we are infinitely inferior. No boldness in poor sinful worms of the dust, that have a right sight of God and themselves, will prompt them to approach to God with less fear and reverence, than spotless and glorious angels in heaven, who cover their faces before his throne, Is. vi. at the beginning. Rebecca, (who in her marriage with Isaac, in almost all its circumstances, was manifestly a great type of the church, the spouse of Christ,) when she meets Isaac, lights off from her camel, and takes a vail, and covers herself; although she was brought to him as his bride, to be with him, in the nearest relation, and most intimate union, that mankind are ever united one to another in.* Elijah, that great prophet, who had so much holy familiarity with God, at a time of special nearness to God, even when he conversed with him in the mount, wrapped his face in his mantle. Which was not because he was terrified with any servile fear, by the terrible *wind*, and *earthquake*, and *fire*; but after these were all over, and God spake to him as a friend, *in a still small voice*: 1 Kings xix. 12, 13. "And after the fire, a still small voice; and it was so, when "Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle." And

* Dr. Ames, in his Cases of conscience, Book III. chap. iv. speaks of an holy modesty in the worship of God, as one sign of true humility.

Moſes, with whom God ſpake face to face, as a man ſpeaks with his friend, and was diſtinguiſhed from all the prophets, in the familiarity with God that he was admitted to; at a time when he was brought neareſt of all, when God ſhewed him his glory in that ſame mount, where he afterwards ſpake to Elijah, "He made haſte, and bowed his head towards the earth, and "worſhipped," Exod. xxxiv. 8. There is in ſome perſons, a moſt unſuitable and unſufferable boldneſs, in their addreſſes to the great JEHOVAH, in an affection of an holy boldneſs, and oſtentation of eminent nearneſs and familiarity; the very thoughts of which would make them ſhrink into nothing, with horror and confuſion, if they ſaw the diſtance that is between God and them. They are like the Phariſee, that boldly came up near, in a confidence of his own eminency in holineſs.—Whereas if they ſaw their vileneſs, they would be more like the publican, that *ſtood afar off, and durſt not ſo much as lift up his eyes to heaven; but ſmote upon his breaſt, ſaying, God be merciful to me a ſinner.* It becomes ſuch ſinful creatures, as we, to approach a holy God (although with faith, and without terror, yet) with contrition, and penitent ſhame and confuſion of face. It is foretold that this ſhould be the diſpoſition of the church in the time of her higheſt privileges on earth, in her latter days of glory, when God ſhould remarkably comfort her, by revealing his covenant-mercy to her; Ezek. xvi. 60. to the end. "I "will eſtabliſh unto thee an everlaſting covenant. Then thou "ſhalt remember thy ways, and be aſhamed. And I will eſtabliſh "my covenant with thee, and thou ſhalt know that I am the "Lord: that thou mayſt remember and be confounded, and "never open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, when "I am pacified toward thee for all that thou haſt done, ſaith "the Lord God." The woman that we read of in the viith chapter of Luke, that was an eminent ſaint, and had much of that true love which caſts out fear, by Chriſt's own teſtimony, verſ. 47. ſhe approached Chriſt in an amiable and acceptable manner, when ſhe came with that humble modeſty, reverence and ſhame, when ſhe ſtood at his feet, weeping *behind him*, as not being fit to appear before his face, and waſhed his feet with her tears.

One reaſon why gracious affections are attended with this tenderneſs of ſpirit which has been ſpoken of, is, that true grace tends to promote convictions of conſcience. Perſons are wont to have convictions of conſcience before they have any grace and

and if afterwards they are truly converted, and have true repentance, and joy, and peace in believing; this has a tendency to put an end to *terrors*, but has no tendency to put an end to *convictions of ſin*, but to increaſe them. It does not ſtupify a man's conſcience; but makes it more ſenſible, more eaſily and thoroughly diſcerning the ſinfulneſs of that which is ſinful, and receiving a greater conviction of the henious and dreadful nature of ſin, ſuſceptive of a quicker and deeper ſenſe of it, and more convinced of his own ſinfulneſs, and wickedneſs of his heart; and conſequently it has a tendency to make him more jealous of his heart. Grace tends to give the ſoul a further and better *conviction* of the ſame things concerning ſin, that it was *convinced* of under a legal work of the ſpirit of God; *viz.* its great contrariety in the will and law, and honour of God, the greatneſs of God's hatred to it, and diſpleaſure againſt it, and the dreadful puniſhment it expoſes to and deſerves. And not only ſo, but it *convinces* the ſoul of ſomething further concerning ſin, that it ſaw nothing of, while only under legal *convictions*; and that is the infinitely hateful nature of ſin, and its dreadfulneſs upon that account. And this makes the heart tender with reſpect to ſin; like David's heart, that ſmote him, when he had cut off Saul's ſkirt. The heart of a true penitent is like a burnt child, that dreads the fire. Whereas on the contrary, he that has had a counterfeit repentance, and falſe comforts and joys, is like iron that has been ſuddenly heat and quenched; it becomes much harder than before. A falſe converſion puts an end to convictions of conſcience; and ſo either takes away, or much diminiſhes that conſcientiouſneſs, which was manifeſted under a work of the law.

All gracious affections have a tendency to promote this Chriſtian tenderneſs of heart, that has been ſpoken of: not only a godly ſorrow; but alſo a gracious joy: Pſal. ii. 11. "Serve "the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." As alſo a gracious hope; Pſal. xxxiii. 18. "Behold, the eye of the "Lord is upon them that fear him; upon them that hope in "his mercy." And Pſal. cxlvii. 11. "The Lord taketh plea- "ſure in them that fear him, in thoſe that hope in his mercy." Yea, the moſt confident and aſſured hope, that is truly gracious, has this tendency. The higher an holy hope is raiſed, the more there is of this Chriſtian tenderneſs. The baniſhing of a ſervile fear, by a holy aſſurance, is attended with a proportionable increaſe of a reverential fear. The diminiſhing of the

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fear of the fruits of God's diſpleaſure in future puniſhment, is attended with a proportionable increaſe of fear of his diſpleaſure itſelf; the diminiſhing of the fear of hell, with an increaſe of the fear of ſin. The vaniſhing of jealouſies of the perſon's ſtate, is attended with a proportionable increaſe of jealouſy of his heart, in a diſtruſt of its ſtrength, wiſdom, ſtability, faithfulneſs, &c. The leſs apt he is to be afraid of natural evil, having *his heart fixed truſting in God*, and ſo *not afraid of evil tidings*; the more apt is he to be alarmed with the appearance of moral evil, or the evil of ſin. As he has more holy boldneſs, ſo he has leſs of ſelf-confidence, and a forward aſſuming boldneſs, and more modeſty. As he is more ſure than others of deliverance from hell, ſo he has more of a ſenſe of the defer of it. He is leſs apt than others to be ſhaken in faith; bu more apt than others to be moved with ſolemn warnings, and with God's frowns, and with the calamities of others. He ha the firmeſt comfort, but the ſofteſt heart: richer than others but pooreſt of all in Spirit: the talleſt and ſtrongeſt ſaint, bu the leaſt and tendereſt child among them.

X. Another thing wherein thoſe affections that are truly gracious and holy, differ from thoſe that are falſe, is *beautiful ſymmetry and proportion.*

Not that the ſymmetry of their virtues, and gracious affection of the ſaints, in this life, is perfect; it oftentimes is in many things defective, through the imperfection of grace, for want of proper inſtructions, through errors in judgment, or ſome particular unhappineſs of natural temper, or defects in education, and many other diſadvantages that might be mentioned. But yet there is, in no wiſe, that monſtrous diſproportion in gracious affections, and the various parts of true religion in the ſaints, that is very commonly to be obſerved, in the falſe religion, and counterfeit graces of hypocrites.

In the truly holy affections of the ſaints is found that proportion, which is the natural conſequence of the univerſality of their ſanctification. They have the whole image of Chriſt upon them: they have *put off the old man*, and have *put on the new man* entire in all his parts and members. *It hath pleaſed the Father that in Chriſt all fulneſs ſhould dwell:* there is in him every grace; *he is full of grace and truth:* and they that are Chriſt's, do *of his fulneſs receive, and grace for grace* (John i. 14, 16.) *i. e.* there is every grace in them, which

in

in Chriſt: *grace for grace*; that is, grace anſwerable to grace: there is no grace in Chriſt, but there is its image in believers to anſwer it: the image is a true image: and there is ſomething of the ſame beautiful proportion in the image, which is in the original; there is feature for feature, and member for member. There is ſymmetry and beauty in God's workmanſhip. The natural body, which God hath made, conſiſts of many members; and all are in a beautiful proportion: ſo it is in the new man, conſiſting of various graces and affections. The body of one that was born a perfect child, may fail of exact proportion through diſtemper, and the weakneſs and wounds of ſome of its members; yet the diſproportion is in no meaſure like that of thoſe that are born monſters.

It is with hypocrites, as it was with Ephraim of old, at a time when God greatly complains of their hypocriſy; Hoſ. vii. "Ephraim is a cake not turned," half roaſted and half raw: there is commonly no manner of uniformity in their affections.

There is in many of them a great partiality, with regard to the ſeveral kinds of religious affections; great affections in ſome things, and no manner of proportion in others. An holy hope and holy fear go together in the ſaints, as has been obſerved from Pſalm. xxxiii. 18. and cxlvii. 11. But in ſome of theſe is the moſt confident hope, while they are void of reverence, ſelf-jealouſy and caution, and to a great degree caſt off fear. In the ſaints, joy and holy fear go together, though the joy be never ſo great: as it was with the diſciples, in that joyful morning of Chriſt's reſurrection, Matt. xxviii. 8. "And "they departed quickly from the ſepulchre, with fear and GREAT "joy.*" But many of theſe rejoice without trembling: their joy is of that ſort, that is truly oppoſite to godly fear.

But particularly, one great difference between ſaints and hypocrites is this, that the joy and comfort of the former is attended with godly ſorrow and mourning for ſin. They have not only ſorrow to prepare them for their firſt comfort, but after they are comforted, and their joy eſtabliſhed. As it is fore told of the church of God, that they ſhould mourn and loath themſelves

* "Renewed care and diligence follows the ſealings of the Spirit. Now is the ſoul at the foot of Chriſt, as Mary was at the ſepulchre, *with fear and great joy*. He that travels the road with a rich treaſure about him, is afraid of a thief in every buſh." *Flavel's Sacramental Meditations*, Med. 4.

themſelves for their ſins, after they were returned from the captivity, and were ſettled in the land of Canaan, the land of reſt, and the land that flows with milk and honey, Ezek. xx. 42, 43. "And ye ſhall know that I am the Lord, when I ſhall bring "you into the land of Iſrael, into the country for the which I "lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers. And there "ſhall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein "ye have been defiled, and ye ſhall loath yourſelves in your "own ſight, for all your evils that ye have committed." As alſo in Ezek. xvi. 61, 62, 63. A true ſaint is like a little child in this reſpect; he never had any godly ſorrow before he was born again; but ſince has it often in exerciſe: as a little child, before it is born, and while it remains in darkneſs, never cries; but as ſoon as ever it ſees the light, it begins to cry; and thenceforward is often crying. Although Chriſt hath borne our griefs, and carried our ſorrows, ſo that we are freed from the *ſorrow of puniſhment*, and may now ſweetly feed upon the comforts Chriſt hath purchaſed for us; yet that hinders not but that our feeding on theſe comforts ſhould be attended with the *ſorrow of repentance*. As of old, the children of Iſrael were commanded, ever more to feed upon the paſchal lamb, with bitter herbs.* True ſaints are ſpoken of in ſcripture, not only

* "If repentance accompanies faith, it is no preſumption to believe. Many know the ſin, and hence believe in Chriſt, truſt in Chriſt, and there is an end of their faith. But what confeſſion and ſorrow for ſin? what more love to Chriſt follows this faith? Truly none. Nay, their faith is the cauſe why they have none. For they think, if if I truſt in Chriſt to forgive me, he will do it; and there is an end of the buſineſs. Verily this hedge-faith, this bramble-faith, that catches hold on Chriſt, and pricks and ſcratches Chriſt, by more impenitency, more contempt of him, is mere preſumption; which ſhall one day be burnt up and deſtroyed by the fire of God's jealouſy. Fy upon that faith, that ſerves only to keep a man from being tormented before his time! Your ſins would be your ſorrows, but that your faith quiets you. But if faith be accompanied with repentance, mourning for ſin, more eſteem of God's grace in Chriſt; ſo that nothing breaks thy heart more than the thoughts of Chriſt's unchangeable love to one ſo vile, and this love makes thee love much, and love him the more; as thy ſin increaſeth, ſo thou deſireſt thy love's increaſe; and now the ſtream of thy thoughts run, how thou mayſt live to him that died for thee: this was Mary's faith, who ſat at Chriſt's feet weeping, waſhing them with her tears, and loving much, becauſe much was forgiven." *Shepard's Sound Believer*, p. 128, 129.

"You

only as thoſe that have mourned for ſin, but as thoſe do mourn whoſe manner it is ſtill to mourn; Matt. v. 4. "Bleſſed are "they that mourn: for they ſhall be comforted."

Not only is there often in hypocrites, an eſſential deficiency, as to the various kinds of religious affections; but alſo a ſtrange partiality and diſproportion, in the ſame affections, with regard to different objects.

Thus as to the affection of *love*, ſome make high pretences, and a great ſhew of love to God and Chriſt, and it may be have been greatly affected with what they have heard or thought concerning them; but they have not a ſpirit of love and benevolence towards men, but are diſpoſed to contention, envy, revenge, and evil-ſpeaking; and will, it may be, ſuffer an old grudge to reſt in their boſoms towards a neighbour, for ſeven years together, if not twice ſeven years; living in real ill-will and bitterneſs of ſpirit towards him: and it may be in their dealings with their neighbours, are not very ſtrict and conſcientious in obſerving the rule of *doing to others, as they would that they ſhould do to them*: 1 John iv. 20. "If a man ſay, I "love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that "loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love "God whom he hath not ſeen?" And on the other hand, there are others, that appear as if they had a great deal of benevolence to men, are very good-natured and generous in their way; but have no love to God.

And

"You ſhall know godly ſorrow (ſays Dr. Preſton, in his diſcourſe on Paul's converſion) by the continuance of it; it is conſtant: but worldly ſorrow is but a paſſion of the mind; it changes, it laſts not. Though for the preſent it may be violent and ſtrong, and work much outwardly; yet it comes but by fits, and continues not: like a land-flood, which violently, for the preſent, overflows the banks; but it will away again; it is not always thus. But godly ſorrow is like a ſpring, that ſtill keeps his running both winter and ſummer, wet and dry, in heat and cold, early and late. So this godly ſorrow is the ſame in a regenerate man ſtill; take him when you will, he is ſtill ſorrowing for ſin. This godly ſorrow ſtands like the centre of the earth, which removes not, but ſtill remains."

"I am perſuaded, many a man's heart is kept from breaking and mourning, becauſe of this. He ſaith (it may be) that he is a vile ſinner; but I truſt in Chriſt, &c. If they do go to Chriſt to deſtroy their ſin, this makes them more ſecure in their ſin. For (ſay they) I cannot help it, and Chriſt muſt do all. Whereas faith makes the ſoul mourn after the Lord the more." *Shepard's Parable of the ten Virgins*, Part II. p. 168.

And as to the love to men, there are ſome that have flowing affections to ſome; but their love is far from being of ſo extenſive and univerſal a nature, as a truly Chriſtian love is. They are full of dear affections to ſome, and full of bitterneſs towards others. They are knit to their own party, them that approve of them, love them and admire them; but are fierce againſt thoſe that oppoſe and diſlike them. Matth. v. 45, 46. "Be like "your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his ſun "to riſe on the evil and on the good.—For if ye love them "which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the "publicans the ſame?" Some ſhew a great affection to their neighbours, and pretend to be raviſhed with the company of the children of God *abroad*; and at the ſame time are uncomfortable and churliſh towards their wives and other near relations *at home*, and are very negligent of relative duties. And as to the great love to ſinners and oppoſers of religion, and the great concern for their ſouls, that there is an appearance of in ſome, even to extreme diſtreſs and agony, ſingling out a particular perſon, from among a multitude, for its object, there being at the ſame time no general compaſſion to ſinners, that are in equally miſerable circumſtances, but what is in a monſtrous diſproportion; this ſeems not to be of the nature of a gracious affection. Not that I ſuppoſe it to be at all ſtrange, that pity to the periſhing ſouls of ſinners ſhould be to a degree of agony, if other things are anſwerable; or that a truly gracious compaſſion to ſouls ſhould be exerciſed much more to ſome perſons than others that are equally miſerable, eſpecially on ſome particular occaſions: there may many things happen to fix the mind, and affect the heart, with reſpect to a particular perſon, at ſuch a juncture; and without doubt ſome ſaints have been in great diſtreſs for the ſouls of particular perſons, ſo as to be as it were in travail for them: but when perſons appear, at particular times, in wracking agonies for the ſoul of ſome ſingle perſon, far beyond what has been uſually heard or read of in eminent ſaints, but appear to be perſons that have a ſpirit of meek and fervent love, charity, and compaſſion to mankind in general, in a far leſs degree than they; I ſay, ſuch agonies are greatly to be ſuſpected, for reaſons already given; viz. that the Spirit of God is wont to give graces and gracious affections in a beautiful ſymmetry and proportion.

And as there is a monſtrous diſproportion in the love of ſome, in its exerciſes towards different perſons, ſo there is in their ſeeming exerciſes of love towards the ſame perſons. Some men

men ſhew a love to others as to their outward man, they are liberal of their worldly ſubſtance, and often give to the poor; but have no love to, or concern for the ſouls of men. Others pretend a great love to mens ſouls, that are not compaſſionate and charitable towards their bodies. The making a great ſhew of love, pity, and diſtreſs for ſouls, coſts them nothing; but in order to ſhew mercy to mens bodies, they muſt part with money out of their pockets. But a true Chriſtian love to our brethren, extends both to their ſouls and bodies; and herein is like the love and compaſſion of Jeſus Chriſt. He ſhewed mercy to mens ſouls, by labouring for them in preaching the goſpel to them; and ſhewed mercy to their bodies, in going about doing good, healing all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſes among the people. We have a remarkable inſtance of Chriſt's having compaſſion at once both to mens ſouls and bodies, and ſhewing compaſſion by feeding both, in Mark vi. 34, &c. "And "Jeſus, when he came out, ſaw much people, and was moved "with compaſſion toward them, becauſe they were as ſheep not "having a ſhepherd: and he began to teach them many things." Here was his compaſſion to their ſouls. And in the ſequel, we have an account of his compaſſion to their bodies, becauſe they had been a long while *having nothing to eat:* he fed five thouſand of them with five loaves and two fiſhes. And if the compaſſion of profeſſing Chriſtians towards others does not work in the ſame ways, it is a ſign that it is no true Chriſtian compaſſion.

And furthermore, it is a ſign that affections are not of the right ſort, if perſons ſeem to be much affected with the bad qualities of their fellow-Chriſtians, as the coldneſs and lifeleſſneſs of other ſaints, but are in no proportion affected with their own defects and corruptions. A true Chriſtian may be affected with the coldneſs and unſavourineſs of other ſaints, and may mourn much over it: but at the ſame time, he is not ſo apt to be affected with the badneſs of any body's heart, as his own; this is moſt in his view; this he is moſt quick-ſighted to diſcern; this he ſees moſt of the aggravations of, and is moſt ready to cry out of. And a leſſer degree of virtue will bring him to pity himſelf, and be concerned at his own calamities, than rightly to be affected with others calamities. And if men have not attained to the leſs, we may determine they never attained to the greater.

And here by the way, I would obſerve, that it may be laid down as a general rule, That if perſons pretend that they come

to high attainments in religion, but have never yet arrived to the leſſer attainments, it is a ſign of a vain pretence. As if perſons pretend, that they have got beyond mere *morality*, to live a *ſpiritual* and *divine* life; but really have not come to be ſo much as *moral* perſons: or pretend to be greatly affected with the wickedneſs of their hearts, and are not affected with the palpable violations of God's commands in their practice, which is a leſſer attainment: or if they pretend to be brought to be even willing to be damned for the glory of God, but have no forwardneſs to ſuffer a little in their eſtates and names, and worldly convenience, for the ſake of their duty: or pretend that they are not afraid to venture their ſouls upon Chriſt, and commit their all to God, truſting to his bare word, and the faithfulneſs of his promiſes, for their eternal welfare; but at the ſame time, have not confidence enough in God, to dare to truſt him with a little of their eſtates, beſtowed to pious and charitable uſes: I ſay, when it is thus with perſons, their pretences are manifeſtly vain. He that is in a journey, and imagines he has got far beyond ſuch a place in his road, and never yet came to it, muſt be miſtaken; and he is not yet arrived to the top of the hill, that never yet got half-way thither. But this by the way.

The ſame that has been obſerved of the affection of *love*, is alſo to be obſerved of *other* religious affections. Thoſe that are true, extend in ſome proportion, to the various things that are their due and proper objects: but when they are falſe, they are commonly ſtrangely diſproportionate. So it is with religious *deſires* and longings: theſe in the ſaints, are to thoſe things that are ſpiritual and excellent in general, and that in ſome proportion to their excellency, importance or neceſſity, or their near concern in them: but in falſe longings it is often far otherwiſe. They will ſtrangely run, with an impatient vehemence, after ſomething of leſs importance, when other things of greater importance are neglected. Thus for inſtance, ſome perſons, from time to time, are attended with a vehement inclination, and unaccountably violent preſſure, to declare to others what they experience, and to exhort others; when there is at the ſame time, no inclination, in any meaſure equal to it, to other things, that true Chriſtianity has as great, yea, a greater tendency to; as the pouring out the ſoul before God in ſecret earneſt prayer and praiſe to him, and more conformity to him, and living more to his glory, *&c.* We read in ſcripture

of

of *groanings that cannot be uttered*, and *ſoul-breakings for the longing it hath*, and *longings, thirſtings and pantings*, much more frequently to theſe latter things, than the former.

And ſo as to *hatred* and *zeal*; when theſe are from right principles, they are againſt ſin in general, in ſome proportion to the degree of ſinfulneſs; Pſal. cxix. 104. "I hate every "falſe way." So verſ. 128. But a falſe hatred and zeal againſt ſin, is againſt ſome particular ſin only. Thus ſome ſeem to be very zealous againſt profaneneſs, and pride in apparel, who themſelves are notorious for covetouſneſs, cloſeneſs, and it may be backbiting, envy towards ſuperiors, turbulency of ſpirit towards rulers, and rooted ill-will to them that have injured them. Falſe zeal is againſt the ſins of others, while men have no zeal againſt their own ſins. But he that has true zeal, exerciſes it chiefly againſt his own ſins; though he ſhews alſo a proper zeal againſt prevailing and dangerous iniquity in others. And ſome pretend to have a great abhorrence of their own ſins of heart, and cry out much of their inward corruption; and yet make light of ſins in practice, and ſeem to commit them without much reſtraint or remorſe; though theſe imply ſin, both in heart and life.

As there is a much greater diſproportion in the exerciſes of falſe affections, than of true, as to different objects; ſo there is alſo, as to different times. For although true Chriſtians are not always alike; yea, there is very great difference, at different times, and the beſt have reaſon to be greatly aſhamed of their unſteadineſs; yet there is in no wiſe that inſtability and inconſtancy in the hearts of thoſe who are true *virgins, that follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth*, which is in falſe-hearted profeſſors. The righteous man is truly ſaid to be one *whoſe heart is fixed, truſting in God*, (Pſal. cxii. 7.) and to have *his heart eſtabliſhed with grace*, (Heb. xiii. 9.) and to *hold on his way*; Job xvii. 9. "The righteous ſhall hold on his way, and "he that hath clean hands ſhall wax ſtronger and ſtronger." It is ſpoken of as a note of the hypocriſy of the Jewiſh church, that they *were as a ſwift dromedary, traverſing her ways*.

If therefore perſons are religious only by fits and ſtarts; if they now and then ſeem to be raiſed up to the clouds in their affections, and then ſuddenly fall down again, loſe all, and become quite careleſs and carnal, and this is their manner of carrying on religion; if they appear greatly moved, and mightily engaged in religion, only in extraordinary ſeaſons, in the

time

time of a remarkable out-pouring of the Spirit, or other uncommon diſpenſation of providence, or upon the real or ſuppoſed receipt of ſome great mercy, when they have received ſome extraordinary temporal mercy, or ſuppoſe that they are newly converted, or have lately had what they call a great diſcovery; but quickly return to ſuch a frame, that their hearts are chiefly upon other things, and the prevailing bent of their hearts and ſtream of their affections is ordinarily towards the things of this world; when they are like the children of Iſrael in the wilderneſs, who had their affections highly raiſed by what God had done for them at the Red ſea, and ſang his praiſe, and ſoon fell a luſting after the fleſh-pots of Egypt; but then again when they came to mount Sinai, and ſaw the great manifeſtations God made of himſelf there, ſeemed to be greatly engaged again, and mightily forward to enter into a covenant with God, ſaying, *All that the Lord hath ſpoken will we do, and be obedient*, but then quickly made them a golden calf: I ſay, when it is thus with perſons, it is a ſign of the unſoundneſs of affections.† They are like the waters in the time of a ſhower

† Dr. Owen (on the Spirit, Book III. Chap. ii. § 18.) ſpeaking of a common work of the Spirit, ſays, "This work operates greatly on the affections: we have given inſtances, in fear, ſorrow, joy, and delight, about ſpiritual things, that are ſtirred up and acted thereby: but yet it comes ſhort in two things, of a thorough work upon the affections themſelves. For, *1ſt*, It doth not *fix* them. And, *2dly*, It doth not *fill* them. 1. It is required that our affections be fixed on heavenly and ſpiritual things: and true grace will effect it; Col. iii. 1, 2. "If ye be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, "where Chriſt ſitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affecti- "ons on things above." The joys, the fears, the hopes, the ſorrows with reference unto ſpiritual and eternal things, which the work before mentioned doth produce, are evanid, uncertain, unſtable, not only as to the degrees, but as to the very being of them. Sometimes they are as a river ready to overflow its banks, men cannot but be pouring them out on all occaſions; and ſometimes as waters that fail, no drop comes from them. Sometimes they are hot, and ſometimes cold; ſometimes up, and ſometimes down; ſometimes all heaven, and ſometimes all world; without equality, without ſtability. But true grace fixeth the affections on ſpiritual things. As to the degrees of their exerciſe, there may be, and is in them a great variety, according as they may be excited, aided, aſſiſted by grace and the means of it; or obſtructed and impeded, by the interpoſition of temptations

ſhower of rain, which during the ſhower, and a little after, run like a brook, and flow abundantly; but are preſently quite dry: and when another ſhower comes, then they will flow again. Whereas a true ſaint is like a ſtream from a living ſpring; which though it may be greatly increaſed by a ſhower of rain, and diminiſhed in time of drought, yet conſtantly runs: (John iv. 14. "The water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a "well of water ſpringing up," &c.) or like a tree planted by ſuch a ſtream, that has a conſtant ſupply at the root, and is always green, even in time of the greateſt drought; Jer. xvii. 7, 8. "Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe "hope the Lord is. For he ſhall be as a tree planted by the "waters, and that ſpreadeth out her roots by the river, and "ſhall not ſee when heat cometh, but her leaf ſhall be green, "and ſhall not be careful in the year of drought, neither ſhall "ceaſe from yielding fruit." Many hypocrites are like comets, that appear for a while with a mighty blaze; but are very unſteady and irregular in their motion, (and are therefore called wandering ſtars, Jude 13.) and their blaze ſoon diſappears, and they appear but once in a great while. But the true ſaints are like the fixed ſtars, which, though they riſe and ſet, and are often clouded, yet are ſtedfaſt in their orb, and may truly be ſaid to ſhine with a conſtant light. Hypocritical affections

are

temptations and diverſions. But the conſtant bent and inclination of renewed affections, is unto ſpiritual things; as the ſcripture every where teſtifieth, and as experience doth confirm."

"There is (ſays Dr. Preſton) a certain love, by fits, which God accepts not; when men come and offer to God great promiſes, like the waves of the ſea, as big as mountains: Oh, they think, they will do much for God! But their minds change; and they become as thoſe high waves, which at laſt fall level with the other waters. If a man ſhould proffer thee great kindneſſes, and thou ſhouldſt afterwards come to him to make uſe of him, and he ſhould look ſtrangely upon thee, as if he were never acquainted with thee; how wouldſt thou eſteem of ſuch love? If we are now on, now off, in our love, God will not eſteem of ſuch love." *Diſcourſe on the divine love of Chriſt.*

Mr. Flavel, ſpeaking of theſe changeable profeſſors, ſays, "Theſe profeſſors have more of the moon than of the ſun; little light, leſs heat, and many changes. They deceive many, yea, they deceive themſelves, but cannot deceive God. They want that ballaſt and eſtabliſhment in themſelves, that would have kept them tight and ſteady." *Touchſtone of Sincerity*, chap. ii. § 2.

are like a violent motion; like that of the air that is moved with winds, (Jude 12.) But gracious affections are more a natural motion; like the ſtream of a river, which though it has many turns hither and thither, and may meet with obſtacles, and run more freely and ſwiftly in ſome places than others; yet in the general, with a ſteady and conſtant courſe tends the ſame way, until it gets to the ocean.

And as there is a ſtrange unevenneſs and diſproportion in falſe affections, at different *times*; ſo there often is in different *places*. Some are greatly affected from time to time when in company; but have nothing that bears any manner of proportion to it, in ſecret, in cloſe meditation, ſecret prayer and converſing with God, when alone, and ſeparated from all the world.* A true Chriſtian doubtleſs delights in religious fellowſhip, and Chriſtian converſation, and finds much to affect his heart in it; but he alſo delights at times to retire from all mankind, to converſe with God in ſolitary places. And this alſo has its peculiar advantages for fixing his heart, and engaging its affections. True religion diſpoſes perſons to be much alone, in ſolitary places, for holy meditation and prayer. So it wrought in Iſaac, Gen. xxiv. 63. And which is much more, ſo it wrought in Jeſus Chriſt. How often do we read of his retiring into mountains and ſolitary places, for holy converſe with his Father? It is difficult to conceal great affections, but

* "The Lord is neglected ſecretly, yet honoured openly; becauſe there is no wind in their chambers to blow their ſails; and therefore there they ſtand ſtill. Hence many men keep their profeſſion, when they loſe their affection. They have by the one a name to live, (and that is enough) though their hearts be dead. And hence ſo long as you love and commend them, ſo long they love you; but if not, they will forſake you. They were warm only by another's fire, and hence having no principle of life within, ſoon grow dead. This is the water that turns a Phariſee's mill." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 180.

"The hypocrite (ſays Mr. Flavel) is not for the cloſet, but the ſynagogue, Matth. vi. 5, 6. It is not his meat and drink to retire from the clamour of the world, to enjoy God in ſecret." *Touchſtone of Sincerity*, Chap. vii. § 2.

Dr. Ames, in his Caſes of conſcience, Lib. III. Chap. v. ſpeaks of it as a thing by which ſincerity may be known, "That perſons be obedient in the abſence, as well as in the preſence of lookers on; in ſecret, as well, yea more than in public;" alledging Phil. ii. 12. and Matth. vi. 6.

but yet gracious affections are of a much more ſilent and ſecret nature, than thoſe that are counterfeit. So it is with the gracious ſorrow of the ſaints. So it is with their ſorrow for their own ſins.† Thus the future gracious mourning of true penitents, at the beginning of the latter-day glory, is repreſented as being ſo ſecret, as to be hidden from the companions of their boſom; Zech. xii. 12, 13, 14. "And the land ſhall mourn, "every family apart, the family of the houſe of David apart, and "their wives apart: the family of the houſe of Nathan apart, "and their wives apart: the family of the houſe of Levi apart, "and their wives apart: the family of Shimei apart, and their "wives apart: all the families that remain, every family apart, "and their wives apart." So it is with their ſorrow for the ſins of others. The ſaints pains and travailing for the ſouls of ſinners is chiefly in ſecret places; Jer. xiii. 17. "If ye will not "hear it, my ſoul ſhall weep in ſecret places for your pride, and "mine eye ſhall weep ſore, and run down with tears, becauſe "the Lord's flock is carried away captive." So it is with gracious joys: they are *hidden manna*, in this reſpect, as well as others, Rev. ii. 17. The Pſalmiſt ſeems to ſpeak of his ſweeteſt comforts, as thoſe that were to be had in ſecret; Pſal. lxiii. 5, 6. "My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs; and "my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips: when I remem-"ber thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-"watches." Chriſt calls forth his ſpouſe, away from the world, into retired places, that he may give her his ſweeteſt love; Cant. vii. 11, 12. "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into "the field; let us lodge in the villages:—there will I give thee "my loves." The moſt eminent divine favours that the ſaints obtained, that we read of in ſcripture, were in their retirement. The principal manifeſtations that God made of himſelf, and his covenant-mercy to Abraham, were when he was alone, apart from his numerous family; as any one will judge that carefully reads his hiſtory. Iſaac received that ſpecial gift of God to him, Rebekah, who was ſo great a comfort to him, and by whom he obtained the promiſed ſeed, walking alone, meditating in the field. Jacob was retired for ſecret prayer, when Chriſt came to him, and he wreſtled with him, and obtained the bleſſing.

God

† Mr. Flavel, in reckoning up thoſe things, wherein the ſorrow of ſaints is diſtinguiſhed from the ſorrow of hypocrites, about their ſins, ſays, "Their troubles for ſin are more private and ſilent troubles than others are; their ſore runs in the night." *Touchſtone of ſincerity*, Chap. vi. § 5.

God revealed himſelf to Moſes in the buſh, when he was in a ſolitary place in the deſert, in the mount Horeb, Exod. iii. at the beginning. And afterwards, when God ſhewed him his glory, and he was admitted to the higheſt degree of communion with God that ever he enjoyed; he was alone, in the ſame mountain, and continued there forty days and forty nights, and then came down with his face ſhining. God came to thoſe great prophets, Elijah and Eliſha, and converſed freely with them, chiefly in their retirement. Elijah converſed alone with God at mount Sinai, as Moſes did. And when Jeſus Chriſt had his greateſt prelibation of his future glory, when he was tranſfigured; it was not when he was with the multitude, or with the twelve diſciples, but retired into a ſolitary place in a mountain, with only three ſelect diſciples, charging them that they ſhould tell no man, until he was riſen from the dead. When the angel Gabriel came to the bleſſed virgin, and when the Holy Ghoſt came upon her, and the power of the Higheſt overſhadowed her, ſhe ſeems to have been alone, and to be in this matter hid from the world; her neareſt and deareſt earthly friend Joſeph, that had betrothed her, (though a juſt man,) knew nothing of the matter. And ſhe that firſt partook of the joy of Chriſt's reſurrection, was alone with Chriſt at the ſepulchre, John xx. And when the beloved diſciple was favoured with thoſe wonderful viſions of Chriſt, and his future diſpenſations towards the church and the world, he was alone in the iſle of Patmos. Not but that we have alſo inſtances of great privileges that the ſaints have received when with others; or that there is not much in Chriſtian converſation, and ſocial and public worſhip, tending greatly to refreſh and rejoice the hearts of the ſaints. But this is all that I aim at by what has been ſaid, to ſhew that it is the nature of true grace, that however it loves Chriſtian ſociety in its place, yet it in a peculiar manner delights in retirement, and ſecret converſe with God. So that if perſons appear greatly engaged in ſocial religion, and but little in the religion of the cloſet, and are often highly affected when with others, and but little moved when they have none but God and Chriſt to converſe with, it looks very darkly upon their religion.

XI. Another great and very diſtinguiſhing difference between gracious affections and others is, that gracious affections the higher they are raiſed, the more is a ſpiritual appetite and longing

longing of ſoul after ſpiritual attainments increaſed. On the contrary, falſe affections reſt ſatisfied in themſelves.*

The more a true ſaint loves God with a gracious love, the more he deſires to love him, and the more uneaſy is he at his want of love to him: the more he hates ſin, the more he deſires to hate it, and laments that he has ſo much remaining love to it: the more he mourns for ſin, the more he longs to mourn for ſin; the more his heart is broke, the more he deſires it ſhould be broke: the more he thirſts and longs after God and holineſs, the more he longs to long, and breathe out his very ſoul in longings after God: the kindling and raiſing of gracious affections is like kindling a flame; the higher it is raiſed, the more ardent it is; and the more it burns, the more vehemently does it tend and ſeek to burn. So that the ſpiritual appetite after holineſs, and an increaſe of holy affections, is much more lively and keen in thoſe that are eminent in holineſs, than others; and more when grace and holy affections are in their moſt lively exerciſe, than at other times. It is as much the nature of one that is ſpiritually new-born, to thirſt after growth in holineſs, as it is the nature of a new-born babe, to thirſt after the mother's breaſt; who has the ſharpeſt appetite, when beſt in health; 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. "As new-born babes "deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow there-"by; if ſo be that ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious." The moſt that the ſaints have in this world, is but a taſte, a prelibation of that future glory which is their proper fulneſs; it is

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* "Truly there is no work of Chriſt that is right, (ſays Mr. Shepard,) but it carries the ſoul to long for more of it." *Parable of the ten Virgins*, Part I. p. 136.

And again, "There is in true grace an infinite circle: a man by thirſting receives, and receiving thirſts for more. But hence the Spirit is not poured out abundantly on churches; becauſe men ſhut it out, by ſhutting in, and contenting themſelves with their common graces and gifts; Matth. vii. 29. Examine if it be not ſo." *Ibid.* p. 182.

And in p. 210. he ſays, "This I ſay, True grace as it comforts, ſo it never fills, but puts an edge on the appetite: more of that grace, Lord! Thus Paul, Phil. iii. 13, 14. Thus David, *Out of my poverty I have given*, &c. 1 Chron. xxix. 3, 17, 18. It is a ſure way never to be deceived in lighter ſtrokes of the Spirit, to be thankful for any, but to be content with no meaſure of it. And this cuts the thread of difference, between a ſuperficial lighter ſtroke of the Spirit, and that which is ſound."

only an earneſt of their future inheritance in their hearts; 2 Cor. i. 22. and v. 5. and Eph. i. 14. The moſt eminent ſaints in this ſtate are but children, compared with their future, which is their proper ſtate of maturity and perfection; as the apoſtle obſerves, 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 11. The greateſt eminency and perfection, that the ſaints arrive to in this world, has no tendency to ſatiety, or to abate their deſires after more; but, on the contrary, makes them more eager to preſs forwards; as is evident by the apoſtle's words, Phil. iii. 13, 14, 15. "Forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth "unto thoſe things which are before, I preſs toward the "mark.—Let us therefore, as many as be PERFECT, be thus "minded."

The reaſons of it are, that the more perſons have of holy affections, the more they have of that ſpiritual taſte which I have ſpoken of elſewhere; whereby they perceive the excellency, and reliſh the divine ſweetneſs of holineſs. And the more grace they have, while in this ſtate of imperfection, the more they ſee their imperfection and emptineſs, and diſtance from what ought to be; and ſo the more do they ſee their need of grace; as I ſhewed at large before, when ſpeaking of the nature of evangelical humiliation. And beſides, grace, as long as it is imperfect, is of a growing nature, and in a growing ſtate. And we ſee it to be ſo with all living things, that while they are in a ſtate of imperfection, and in their growing ſtate, their nature ſeeks after growth; and ſo much the more, as they are more healthy and proſperous. Therefore the cry of every true grace, is like that cry of true faith, Mark ix. 24. "Lord, I "believe, help thou my unbelief." And the greater ſpiritual diſcoveries and affections the true Chriſtian has, the more does he become of an earneſt beggar for grace, and ſpiritual food, that he may grow; and the more earneſtly does he purſue after it, in the uſe of proper means and endeavours; for true and gracious longings after holineſs, are no idle ineffectual deſires.

But here ſome may object and ſay, How is this conſiſtent with what all allow, that ſpiritual enjoyments are of a ſoul-ſatisfying nature?

I anſwer, its being ſo, will appear to be not at all inconſiſtent with what has been ſaid, if it be conſidered in what manner ſpiritual enjoyments are ſaid to be of a ſoul-ſatisfying nature. Certainly they are not ſo in that ſenſe, that they are of ſo cloying a nature, that he who has any thing of them, though

though but in a very imperfect degree, desires no more. But spiritual enjoyments are of a soul-satisfying nature in the following respects. 1. They in their kind and nature, are fully adapted to the nature, capacity and need of the soul of man. So that those who find them, desire *no other kind* of enjoyments; they sit down fully contented with that kind of happiness which they have, desiring no change, nor inclining to wander about any more, saying, *Who will shew us any good?* the soul is never cloyed, never weary; but perpetually giving up itself, with all its powers, to this happiness. But not that those who have something of this happiness, desire no more of the same. 2. They are satisfying also in this respect, that they answer the expectation of the appetite. When the appetite is high to any thing, the expectation is consequently so. Appetite to a particular object, implies expectation in its nature. This expectation is not satisfied by worldly enjoyments, the man expected to have a great accession of happiness, but he is disappointed. But it is not so with spiritual enjoyments; they fully answer and satisfy the expectation. 3. The gratification and pleasure of spiritual enjoyments is permanent. It is not so with worldly enjoyments. They in a sense satisfy particular appetites: but the appetite in being satisfied, is glutted, and then the pleasure is over: and as soon as that is over, the general appetite of human nature after happiness returns; but is empty, and without any thing to satisfy it. So that the glutting of a particular appetite, does but take away from, and leave empty, the general thirst of nature. 4. Spiritual good is satisfying, as there is enough in it to satisfy the soul, as to degree, if obstacles were but removed, and the enjoying faculty duly applied. There is room enough here for the soul to extend itself; here is an infinite ocean of it. If men be not satisfied here, in degree of happiness, the cause is with themselves; it is because they do not open their mouths wide enough.

But these things do not argue that a soul has no appetite excited after more of the same, that has tasted a little: or that his appetite will not increase, the more he tastes, until he comes to fulness of enjoyment: as bodies that are attracted to the globe of the earth, tend to it more strongly, the nearer they come to the attracting body, and are not at rest out of the centre. Spiritual good is of a satisfying nature; and for that very reason, the soul that tastes, and knows its nature, will thirst after it, and a fulness of it, that it may be satisfied. And

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the more he experiences, and the more he knows this excellent, unparalleled, exquiſite, and ſatisfying ſweetneſs, the more earneſtly will he hunger and thirſt for more, until he comes to perfection. And therefore this is the nature of ſpiritual affections, that the greater they be, the greater the appetite and longing is after grace and holineſs.

But with thoſe joys, and other religious affections, that are falſe and counterfeit, it is otherwiſe. If before, there was a great deſire, of ſome ſort, after grace; as theſe affections riſe, *that* deſire ceaſes, or is abated. It may be before, while the man was under legal convictions, and much afraid of hell, he earneſtly longed that he might obtain ſpiritual light in his underſtanding, and faith in Chriſt, and love to God: but now, when theſe falſe affections are riſen, that deceive him, and make him confident that he is converted, and his ſtate good, there are no more earneſt longings after light and grace; for his end is anſwered; he is confident that his ſins are forgiven him, and that he ſhall go to heaven; and ſo he is ſatisfied. And eſpecially when falſe affections are raiſed very high, do they put an end to longings after grace and holineſs. The man now is far from appearing to himſelf a poor empty creature; on the contrary, he is rich, and increaſed with goods, and hardly conceives of any thing more excellent, than what he has already attained to.

Hence there is an end to many perſons earneſtneſs in ſeeking, after they have once obtained that which they call their converſion; or at leaſt, after they have had thoſe high affections, that make them fully confident of it. Before, while they looked upon themſelves as in a ſtate of nature, they were engaged in ſeeking after God and Chriſt, and cried earneſtly for grace, and ſtrove in the uſe of means: but now they act though they thought their work was done; they live upon their firſt work, or ſome high experiences that are paſt; and there is an end to their crying, and ſtriving after God and grace.*

Whereas

* "It is uſual to ſee a falſe heart moſt diligent in ſeeking the Lord, when he has been worſt, and moſt careleſs when it is beſt. Hence many at firſt converſion, ſought the Lord earneſtly: afterwards affections and endeavours die; that now they are as good as the word can make them.—An hypocrite's laſt end is to ſatisfy himſelf: hence he has enough. A ſaint's is to ſatisfy Chriſt: hence he never has enough." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 157.

"Many

Whereas the holy principles that actuate a true ſaint, have a far more powerful influence to ſtir him up to earneſtneſs in ſeeking God and holineſs, than ſervile fear. Hence ſeeking God is ſpoken of as one of the diſtinguiſhing characters of the ſaints; and *thoſe that ſeek God*, is one of the names by which the godly are called in ſcripture; Pſal. xxiv. 6. "This is the "generation of them that ſeek him, that ſeek thy face, O Ja-"cob." Pſal. lxix. 6. "Let not thoſe that ſeek thee, be con-"founded for my ſake." verſ. 32. "The humble ſhall ſee "this, and be glad; and your heart ſhall live that ſeek God." And lxx. 4. "Let all thoſe that ſeek thee, rejoice, and be glad "in thee: and let ſuch as love thy ſalvation ſay continually, the "Lord be magnified." And the ſcriptures every where repreſent the ſeeking, ſtriving and labor of a Chriſtian, as being chiefly after his converſion, and his converſion as being but the beginning of his work. And almoſt all that is ſaid in the New

"Many a man, it may be, may ſay, I have nothing in myſelf, and all is in Chriſt; and comfort himſelf there; and ſo falls aſleep.—Hands off! and touch not this ark, leſt the Lord ſlay thee: a Chriſt of clouts would ſerve your turn as well." *Ibid.* p. 71.

"An hypocrite's light goes out, and grows not. Hence many ancient ſtanders take all their comfort from their firſt work, and droop when in old age." *Ibid.* p. 77.

And p. 93, 94. Mr. Shepard, mentioning the characters of thoſe that have a dead hope, ſays, "They that content themſelves with any meaſure of holineſs and grace, they look not for Chriſt's coming and company. For ſaints that do look for him, though they have not that holineſs and grace they would have, yet they reſt not ſatisfied with any meaſure; 1 John iii. 3. "He that hath this hope, purifieth himſelf as he is pure."—The ſaints content not themſelves with any dreſſings, until made glorious; and ſo fit for fellowſhip with that ſpouſe.—When a man leaves not, until he gets ſuch a meaſure of faith and grace, and now when he has got this, contents himſelf with this, as a good ſign that he ſhall be ſaved, he looks not for Chriſt. Or when men are heavily laden with ſin; then cloſe with Chriſt; and then are comforted, ſealed, and have joy that fills them; and now the work is done.—And when men ſhall not content themſelves with any meaſure; but wiſh they had more, if grace would grow, while they tell clocks and ſit idle; and ſo God muſt do all; but do not purge themſelves, and make work of it."

Again, p. 109. "There is never a hypocrite living, but cloſeth with Chriſt for his own ends: for he cannot work beyond his principle. Now when men have ſerved their own turns out of another man,

New Teſtament, of mens watching, giving earneſt heed to themſelves, running the race that is ſet before them, ſtriving and agonizing, wreſtling not with fleſh and blood, but principalities and powers, fighting, putting on the whole armour of God, and ſtanding, having done all to ſtand, preſſing forward, reaching forth, continuing inſtant in prayer, crying to God day and night; I ſay, almoſt all that is ſaid in the New Teſtament of theſe things, is ſpoken of, and directed to the ſaints. Where theſe things are applied to ſinners ſeeking converſion once, are ſpoken of the ſaints proſecution of the great buſineſs of their high calling ten times. But many in theſe days have got into a ſtrange antiſcriptural way, of having all their ſtriving and wreſtling over before they are converted; and ſo having an eaſy time of it afterwards, to ſit down and enjoy their ſloth and indolence; as thoſe that now have a ſupply of their wants, and are become rich and full. But when the Lord *fills the hungry*

man, away they go, and keep that which they have. An hypocrite cloſeth with Chriſt, as a man with a rich ſhop; he will not be at coſt to buy all the ſhop, but ſo much as ſerves his turn. Commonly men in horror, ſeek ſo much of Chriſt as will eaſe them; and hence profeſs, and hence ſeek for ſo much of Chriſt as will credit them; and hence their deſires after Chriſt are ſoon ſatisfied." *Appetitus finis eſt infinitus.*"

Wo to thee that canſt paint ſuch a Chriſt in thy head, and receive ſuch a Chriſt into thy heart, as muſt be a pander to your ſloth. The Lord will revenge this wrong done to his glory, with greater ſorrows than ever any felt: to make Chriſt not only meat and drink to feed, but cloaths to cover your ſloth.—Why what can we do? what can we do?—Why as the firſt Adam conveys not only guilt, but power; ſo the ſecond conveys both righteouſneſs and ſtrength." *Ibid.* p. 158.

" When the Lord hath given ſome light and affection, and ſome comfort and ſome reformation, now a man grows full here. Saints do for God; and carnal hearts do ſomething too; but a little fills them, and quiets them, and ſo damns them. And hence men at the firſt work upon them, are very diligent in the uſe of means; but after that, they be brought to neglect prayer, ſleep out ſermons and to be careleſs, ſapleſs, lifeleſs." *Ibid.* p. 210.

" It is an argument of want of grace, when a man ſaith to himſelf, as the glutton ſaid to his ſoul, *Take thy reſt, for thou haſt goods laid up for many years.* So thou haſt repentance and grace, and peace enough *for many years:* and hence the ſoul takes its reſt, grows ſluggiſh and negligent. Oh, if you die in this caſe, this night thy ſoul ſhall be taken away to hell." *Ibid.* p. 227.

hungry with good things, theſe rich are like to be *ſent away empty*, Luke i. 53.

But doubtleſs there are ſome hypocrites, that have only falſe affections, who will think they are able to ſtand this trial; and will readily ſay, that they deſire not to reſt ſatisfied with paſt attainments, but to be preſſing forward, they do deſire more, they long after God and Chriſt, and deſire more holineſs, and do ſeek it. But the truth is, their deſires are not properly the deſires of appetite after holineſs, for its own ſake, or for the moral excellency and holy ſweetneſs that is in it; but only for by-ends. They long after clearer diſcoveries, that they may be better ſatisfied about the ſtate of their ſouls; or becauſe in great diſcoveries, ſelf is gratified, in being made ſo much of by God, and ſo exalted above others; they long to taſte the love of God, (as they call it) more than to have more love to God. Or, it may be, they have a kind of forced, fancied or made longings; becauſe they think they muſt long for more grace, otherwiſe it will be a dark ſign upon them. But ſuch things as theſe are far different from the natural, and as it were neceſſary appetite and thirſting of the new man, after God and holineſs. There is an inward burning deſire that a ſaint has after holineſs, as natural to the new creature, as vital heat is to the body. There is a holy breathing and panting after the Spirit of God, to increaſe holineſs, as natural to a holy nature, as breathing is to a living body. And holineſs or ſanctification is more directly the object of it, than any manifeſtation of God's love and favour. This is the meat and drink that is the object of the ſpiritual appetite; John iv. 34. "My "meat is to do the will of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his "work." Where we read in ſcripture of the deſires, longings, and thirſtings of the ſaints, righteouſneſs and God's laws are much more frequently mentioned, as the object of them, than any thing elſe. The ſaints *deſire the ſincere milk of the word*, not ſo much to teſtify God's love to them, as *that they may grow thereby* in holineſs. I have ſhewn before, that holineſs is that good which is the immediate object of a ſpiritual taſte. But undoubtedly the ſame ſweetneſs that is the chief object of a ſpiritual taſte, is alſo the chief object of a ſpiritual appetite. Grace is the godly man's treaſure; Iſ. xxxiii. 6. "The fear "of the Lord is his treaſure." Godlineſs is the gain that he is covetous and greedy of, 1 Tim. vi. 6. Hypocrites long for diſcoveries, more for the preſent comfort of the diſcovery,

and

and the high manifeſtation of God's love in it, than for any ſanctifying influence of it. But neither a longing after great diſcoveries, or after great taſtes of the love of God, nor longing to be in heaven, nor longing to die, are in any meaſure ſo diſtinguiſhing marks of true ſaints, as longing after a more holy heart, and living a more holy life.

But I am come now to the laſt diſtinguiſhing mark of holy affections that I ſhall mention.

XII. Gracious and holy affections have their exerciſe and fruit in Chriſtian practice.——I mean, they have that influence and power upon him who is the ſubject of them, that they cauſe that a practice, which is univerſally conformed to, and directed by Chriſtian rules, ſhould be the practice and buſineſs of his life.

This implies three things: 1. That his behaviour or practice in the world, be univerſally conformed to, and directed by Chriſtian rules. 2. That he makes a buſineſs of ſuch a holy practice above all things; that it be a buſineſs which he is chiefly engaged in, and devoted to, and purſues with higheſt earneſtneſs and diligence: ſo that he may be ſaid to make this practice of religion eminently *his work and buſineſs*. And, 3. That he perſiſts in it to the end of life: ſo that it may be ſaid, not only to be his buſineſs at certain ſeaſons, the buſineſs of Sabbath-days, or certain extraordinary times, or the buſineſs of a month, or a year, or of ſeven years, or his buſineſs under certain circumſtances; but the *buſineſs of his life*; it being that buſineſs which he perſeveres in through all changes, and under all trials, as long as he lives.

The neceſſity of each of theſe, in all true Chriſtians, is moſt clearly and fully taught in the word of God.

1. It is neceſſary that men ſhould be univerſally obediant:* 1 John iii. 3, &c. "Every man that hath this hope in him, "purifieth

* "He that pretends to godlineſs, and turns aſide to crooked ways, is an hypocrite: for thoſe that are really godly, do live in a way of obedience; Pſal. cxix. 1, 2, 3. "Bleſſed are the undefiled in "the way, that walk in the law of the Lord. They alſo do no iniquity." Luke i. 6. "They were both righteous before God, "walking in all the commandments of the Lord, blameleſs." But ſuch

" purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.—And ye know that he
" was manifeſted to take away our ſins; and in him is no ſin.
" Whoſoever abideth in him, ſinneth not: whoſoever ſinneth,
" hath not ſeen him, neither known him.—He that doth righ-
" teouſneſs, is righteous, even as he is righteous: he that
" committeth ſin, is of the devil." Chap. v. 18. " We know
" that whoſoever is born of God, ſinneth not, but he that is
" begotten of God, keepeth himſelf, and that wicked one
" toucheth him not." John xv. 14. Ye are my friends, if ye
" do whatſoever I command you." James ii. 10. " Whoſoever

ſuch as live in ways of ſin, are diſſemblers; for all ſuch will be rejected in the day of judgment; Matth. vii. 23. " Depart from me, ye
" that work iniquity." The like we have Luke xiii. 27. If men live in a way of diſobedience, they do not love God; for love will make men keep God's commandments; 1 John v. 3. " Herein is
" love, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments
" are not grievous." If men live in a way of diſobedience, they have not a ſpirit of faith: for faith ſanctifies men; Acts xxvi. 18.
" Sanctified by faith that is in me." If men live in a way of diſobedience, they are not Chriſt's ſheep; for his ſheep hear his voice; John x. 27. Men that live in a way of diſobedience are not born of God; 1 John iii. 9. " He that is born of God, ſinneth not."
Men that live in a way of diſobedience are the ſervants of ſin; John viii. 34. " He that committeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin."—A courſe of external ſin is an evidence of hypocriſy; whether it be a ſin of omiſſion or commiſſion. If men live in the neglect of known duties, or in the practice of known evils, that will be their condemnation; let the ſin be what it will; let it be profaneneſs, uncleanneſs, lying, or injuſtice.——If men allow themſelves in malice, envy, wanton thoughts, profane thoughts, that will condemn them; though thoſe corruptions do not break out in any ſcandalous way. Theſe thoughts are an evidence of a rotten heart; Tit. iii. 3. " We ourſelves were
" ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and
" pleaſures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one an-
" other." If a man allows himſelf, though he thinks he doth not, in malice and envy, he is an hypocrite: though his conſcience diſallows it, yet if his heart allows it, he is no ſaint.—Some make pretences to godlineſs, whereby they do not only deceive others, but (which is a great deal worſe) deceive themſelves alſo: but this will condemn them, that they live in a courſe of ſin, and ſo muſt go with ungodly men; Pſal. cxxv. 5. " As for ſuch as turn aſide unto their crooked
" ways, the Lord will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity."
If there be a great change in a man's carriage, and he be reformed in ſeveral particulars, yet if there be one evil way, the man is an

" ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point,
" he is guilty of all." 1 Cor. vi. 9. " Know ye not that the
" unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not
" deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, &c. ſhall in-
" herit the kingdom of God." Gal. v. 19, 20. " Now the
" works of the fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe, Adultery,
" fornication, uncleanneſs, laſciviouſneſs, idolatry, witchcraft,
" hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, ſtrife, envyings, mur-
" ders, drunkenneſs, revellings, and ſuch like: of the which
" I tell you before, as I have alſo told you in time paſt, that
" they

ungodly man: where there is piety there is univerſal obedience. A man may have great infirmities, yet be a godly man. So it was with Lot, David, and Peter: but if he lives in a way of ſin, he does not render his godlineſs only ſuſpicious, but it is full evidence againſt him. Men that are godly have reſpect to all God's commandments, Pſal. cxix. 6. There be a great many commands, and if there be one of them that a man has not reſpect unto, he will be put to ſhame another day. If a man lives in one evil way, he is not ſubject to God's authority: but then he lives in rebellion; and that will take off all his pleas, and at once cut off all his pretences; and he will be condemned in the day of judgment.—One way of ſin is exception enough againſt the man's ſalvation. Though the ſin that he lives in be but ſmall; ſuch perſons will not be guilty of perjury, ſtealing, drunkenneſs, fornication; they look upon them to be heinous things, and they are afraid of them; but they do not much matter it, if they oppreſs a little in a bargain, if they commend a thing too much when they are about to ſell it, if they break a promiſe, if they ſpend the Sabbath unprofitably, if they neglect ſecret prayer, if they talk rudely, and reproach others; they think theſe are but ſmall things: if they can keep clear of great tranſgreſſion, they hope that God will not inſiſt upon ſmall things. But indeed all the commands of God are eſtabliſhed by divine authority: a ſmall ſhot may kill a man, as well as a cannon-bullet: a ſmall leak may ſink a ſhip. If a man lives in ſmall ſins, that ſhews he has no love to God, no ſincere care to pleaſe and honor God. Little ſins are of a damning nature, as well as great: if they do not deſerve ſo much puniſhment as greater, yet they do deſerve damnation. There is a contempt of God in all ſins; Matth. v. 19. " He that ſhall break one of the leaſt of theſe
" commands, and ſhall teach men ſo, ſhall be called the leaſt in
" the kingdom of God." Prov. xix. 16. " He that keepeth the
" commandment, keepeth his own ſoul; but he that deſpiſeth his
" way, ſhall die." If a man ſays, this is a great command, and ſo lays weight on it, and another is a little commandment, and ſo does not regard it, but will allow himſelf to break it, he is in a periſhing condition." *Steddard's Way to know ſincerity and hypocriſy.*

" they which do ſuch things, ſhall not inherit the kingdom of " God." Which is as much as to ſay, they that do any ſort of wickedneſs. Job xxxi. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. " Is not deſtruction " to the wicked? and a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of " iniquity? Doth not he ſee my ways, and count all my ſteps? " Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know " mine integrity. If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and " mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath clea- " ved to my hands," *&c.* Ezek. xxxiii. 15. " If he walk in " the ſtatutes of life, without committing iniquity, he ſhall " ſurely live." If one member only be corrupt, and we do not cut it off, it will carry the whole body to hell, Matth. v. 29, 30. Saul was commanded to ſlay all God's enemies, the Amalekites; and he ſlew all but Agag, and the ſaving him alive proved his ruin. Caleb and Joſhua entered into God's promiſed reſt, becauſe they *wholly* followed the Lord, Numb. xiv. 24. and xxxii. 11, 12. Deut. i. 36. Joſh. xiv. 6, 8, 9, 14. Naaman's hypocriſy appeared in that, however he ſeemed to be greatly affected with gratitude to God for healing his le- proſy, and engaged to ſerve him, yet in one thing he deſired to be excuſed. And Herod, though he feared John, and ob- ſerved him, and heard him gladly, and did many things; yet was condemned, in that in one thing he would not hearken to him, even in parting with his beloved Herodias. So that it is neceſſary that men ſhould part with their deareſt iniquities, which are as their right hand and right eyes, ſins that moſt eaſily beſet them, and which they are moſt expoſed to by their natural inclinations, evil cuſtoms, or particular circumſtances, as well as others. As Joſeph would not make known himſelf to his brethren, who had ſold him, until Benjamin the beloved child of the family, that was moſt hardly parted with, was delivered up; no more will Chriſt reveal his love to us, until we part with our deareſt luſts, and until we are brought to comply with the moſt difficult duties, and thoſe that we have the greateſt averſion to.

And it is of importance, that it ſhould be obſerved, that in order to a man's being truly ſaid to be univerſally obedient, his obedience muſt not only conſiſt in *negatives*, or in univer- ſally avoiding wicked practices, conſiſting in ſins of commiſ- ſion; but he muſt alſo be univerſal in the *poſitives* of religion. Sins of omiſſion are as much breaches of God's commands, as ſins of commiſſion. Chriſt, in Matth. xxv. repreſents thoſe on

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the left hand, as being condemned and curſed to everlaſting fire, for ſins of omiſſion, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat, &c.* A man therefore cannot be ſaid to be univerſally obedient, and of a Chriſtian converſation, only becauſe he is no thief, nor oppreſſor, nor fraudulent perſon, nor drunkard, nor tavern-haunter, nor whoremaſter, nor rioter, nor night-walker, nor unclean, nor profane in his language, nor ſlanderer, nor liar, nor furious, nor malicious, nor reviler : he is falſely ſaid to be of a converſation that becomes the goſpel, who goes thus far and no farther ; but in order to this, it is neceſſary that he ſhould alſo be of a ſerious, religious, devout, humble, meek, forgiving, peaceful, reſpectful, condeſcending, benevolent, merciful, charitable and beneficent walk and converſation. Without ſuch things as theſe, he does not obey the laws of Chriſt, and laws that he and his apoſtles did abundantly inſiſt on, as of greateſt importance and neceſſity.

2. In order to mens being true Chriſtians, it is neceſſary that they proſecute the buſineſs of religion, and the ſervice of God with great earneſtneſs and diligence, as the work which they devote themſelves to, and make the main buſineſs of their lives. All Chriſt's *peculiar people*, not only do good works, but are " zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14. No man can do the ſervice of two maſters at once. They that are God's true ſervants, do give up themſelves to his ſervice, and make it as it were their whole work, therein employing their whole hearts, and the chief of their ſtrength ; Phil. iii. 13. " This one thing " I do." Chriſtians in their effectual calling, are not called to idleneſs, but to labour in God's vineyard, and ſpend their day in doing a great and laborious ſervice. All true Chriſtians comply with this call, (as is implied in its being an effectual call,) and do the work of Chriſtians ; which is every where in the New Teſtament compared to thoſe exerciſes, wherein men are wont to exert their ſtrength, with the greateſt earneſtneſs, as running, wreſtling, fighting. All true Chriſtians are good and faithful ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, and *fight the good fight of faith* : for none but thoſe who do ſo, do ever *lay hold on eternal life*. Thoſe who *fight as thoſe that beat the air*, never win the crown of victory. *They that run in a race, run all ; but one wins the prize* ; and they that are ſlack and negligent in their courſe, do not *ſo run, as that they may obtain*. The kingdom of heaven is not to be taken but by violence. Without

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out earneſtneſs there is no getting along, in that narrow way that leads to life; and ſo no arriving at that ſtate of glorious life and happineſs which it leads to. Without earneſt labour, there is no aſcending the ſteep and high hill of Zion; and ſo no arriving at the heavenly city on the top of it. Without a conſtant laborioufneſs, there is no ſtemming the ſwift ſtream in which we ſwim, ſo as ever to come to that fountain of water of life, that is at the head of it. There is need that we ſhould *watch and pray always*, in order to our *eſcaping thoſe* dreadful *things*, that are coming on the ungodly, and our *being counted worthy to ſtand before the Son of man*. There is need of our *putting on the whole armour of God, and doing all to ſtand*, in order to our avoiding a total overthrow, and being utterly deſtroyed by the *fiery darts of the devil*. There is need that we ſhould *forget the things that are behind*, and *be reaching forth to the things that are before, and preſſing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, in order to our obtaining that prize. Slothfulneſs in the ſervice of God, in his profeſſed ſervants, is as damning, as open rebellion: for the *ſlothful ſervant*, is a *wicked ſervant*, and ſhall be caſt into outer darkneſs, among God's open enemies, Matth. xxv. 26, 30. They that are *ſlothful*, are not *followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promiſes*; Heb. vi. 11, 12. "And we deſire that every one of you do ſhew the "ſame diligence, to the full aſſurance of hope unto the end: "that ye be not ſlothful, but followers of them, who through "faith and patience inherit the promiſes." And all they who follow "that cloud of witneſſes" that are gone before to heaven, do "lay aſide every weight, and the ſin that eaſily beſets "them, and do run with patience the race that is ſet before "them," Heb. xii. 1. That true faith, by which perſons rely on the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the work that he hath done for them, and do truly feed and live upon him, is evermore accompanied with ſuch a ſpirit of earneſtneſs in the Chriſtian work and courſe. Which was typified of old, by the manner of the children of Iſrael's feeding on the paſchal lamb; who were directed to eat it, as thoſe that were in haſte, with their loins girded, their ſhoes on their feet, and ſtaff in their hand; Exod. xii. 11. "And thus ſhall ye eat it, with your loins gird-"ed, your ſhoes on your feet, and your ſtaff in your hand: and "ye ſhall eat it in haſte; it is the Lord's paſſover."

3. Every true Chriſtian perſeveres in this way of univerſal obedience,

obedience, and diligent and earneſt ſervice of God, through al the various kinds of trials that he meets with, to the end of life That all true ſaints, all thoſe that do obtain eternal life, do thus perſevere in the practice of religion, and the ſervice of God, is a doctrine ſo abundantly taught in the ſcripture, that particularly to rehearſe all the texts which imply it would be endleſs I ſhall content myſelf with referring to ſome in the margin.*

But *that* in perſeverance in obedience, which is chiefly inſiſted on in the ſcripture, as a ſpecial note of the truth of grace, is the continuance of profeſſors in the practice of their duty, and being ſtedfaſt in an holy walk, through the various *trials* that they meet with.

By *trials* here, I mean, thoſe things that occur, and that a profeſſor meets with in his courſe, that do eſpecially render his continuance in his duty, and faithfulneſs to God, difficult to nature. Theſe things are from time to time called in ſcripture by the name of *trials*, or *temptations*, (which are words of the ſame ſignification.) Theſe are of various kinds: there are many things that render perſons continuance in the way of their duty difficult, by their tendency to cheriſh and foment, or to ſtir up and provoke their luſts and corruptions. Many things make it hard to continue in the way of duty, by their being of an alluring nature, and having a tendency to entice perſons to ſin; or by their tendency to take off reſtraints, and embolden them in iniquity. Other things are trials of the ſoundneſs and ſtedfaſtneſs of profeſſors, by their tendency to make their duty appear terrible to them, and ſo to affright and drive them from it; ſuch as the ſufferings which their duty will expoſe them to; pain, ill-will, contempt, and reproach, or loſs of outward poſſeſſions and comforts. If perſons, after they have made a profeſſion of religion, live any conſiderable time in this world, which is ſo full of changes, and ſo full of evil, it cannot be otherwiſe, than that they ſhould meet with many trials of their ſincerity and ſtedfaſtneſs. And beſides, it is God's manner, in his providence,

* Deut. v. 29. Deut. xxxii. 18, 19, 20. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Pſal. lxxviii. 7, 8, 10, 11, 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 56. *&c.* Pſal. cvi. 3. 12—15. Pſal. cxxv. 4, 5. Prov. xxvi. 11. If. lxiv. 5. Jer. xvii. 13. Ezek. iii. 20. and xviii. 24. and xxxiii. 12, 13. Matth. x. 22. and xiii. 4—8. with verſes 19.—23. and xxv. 8. and xxiv. 12, 13. Luke ix. 62. and xii. 35. *&c.* and xxii. 28. and xvii. 32. John viii. 30, 31. and xv. 6, 7, 8, 10, 16. Rom. ii. 7. and xi. 22. Col. i. 22, 23. Heb. iii. 6, 12, 14. and vi. 11, 12. and x. 35. *&c.* James i. 25. Rev. ii. 13, 26. and ii. 10. 1 Tim. ii. 15. 2 Tim. iv. 4.—8.

providence, to bring trials on his profeſſing friends and ſervants deſignedly, that he may manifeſt them, and may exhibit ſufficient matter of conviction of the ſtate which they are in, to their own conſciences; and oftentimes, to the world. As appears by innumerable ſcriptures; ſome are referred to the margin.*

True ſaints may be guilty of ſome kinds and degrees of backſliding, and may be foiled by particular temptations, and may fall into ſin, yea great ſins: but they can never fall away ſo, as to grow weary of religion, and the ſervice of God, and habitually to diſlike it and neglect it, either on its own account, or on account of the difficulties that attend it; as is evident by Gal. vi. 9. Rom. ii. 7. Heb. x. 36. Iſ. xliii. 22. Mal. i. 13. They can never backſlide, ſo as to continue no longer in a *way* of univerſal obedience: or ſo, that it ſhall ceaſe to be their *manner* to obſerve all the rules of Chriſtianity, and do all duties required, even the moſt difficult, and in the moſt difficult circumſtances.† This is abundantly manifeſted by the things that have

* Gen. xxii. 1. Exod. xv. 25. and xvi. 4. Deut. viii. 2, 15, 16. and xiii. 3. Judg. ii. 22. and iii. 1, 4. Job xxiii. 10. Pſal. lxvi. 10, 11. Ezek. iii. 20. Dan. xii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. Matth. viii. 19, 20. and xviii. 21, 22. Luke i. 35. 1 Cor. xi. 19. 2 Cor. viii. 8. Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 12. 1 John ii. 19. Heb. xi. 17. Rev. iii. 10.

† "One way of ſin is exception enough againſt mens ſalvation, though their temptations be great. Some perſons delight in iniquity; they take pleaſure in rudeneſs, and intemperate practices: but there be others, that do not delight in ſin; when they can handſomely avoid it, they do not chuſe it; except they be under ſome great neceſſity, they will not do it. They are afraid to ſin; they think it is dangerous, and have ſome care to avoid it: but ſometimes they force themſelves to ſin; they are reduced to difficulties, and cannot tell how well to avoid it; it is a dangerous thing not to do it. If Naaman do not bow himſelf in the houſe of Rimmon, the king will be in a rage with him, take away his office, it may be take away his life, and ſo he complies; 2 Kings v. 18.—So Jeroboam forced himſelf to ſet up the calves at Dan and Bethel: he thought that if the people went up to Jeruſalem to worſhip, they would return to Rehoboam, and kill him; therefore he muſt think of ſome expedient to deliver himſelf in this ſtrait; 1 Kings xii. 27, 28. He was driven by appearing neceſſity to take this wicked courſe.—So the ſtony-ground hearers were willing to retain the profeſſion of the true religion; but the caſe was ſuch, that they thought they could not well do it: Matt. xiii. 21. "When tribulati-
" on or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is
" offended."

have been obſerved already. Nor can they ever fall away ſo, as habitually to be more engaged in other things, than in the buſineſs of religion; or ſo that it ſhould become their way and manner to ſerve ſomething elſe more than God; or ſo as ſtatedly to ceaſe to ſerve God, with ſuch earneſtneſs and diligence, as ſtill to be habitually devoted and given up to the buſineſs of religion; unleſs thoſe words of Chriſt can fall to the ground, *Ye cannot ſerve two maſters*, and thoſe of the apoſtle, *He that will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God*; and unleſs a ſaint can change his God, and yet be a true ſaint. Nor can a true ſaint ever fall away ſo, that it ſhall come to this, that ordinarily there ſhall be no remarkable difference in his walk and behaviour ſince his converſion from what was before. They that are truly converted are new men, new creatures; new, not only within, but without; they are ſanctified throughout, in ſpirit, ſoul and body; old things are paſſed away, all things are become new; they have new hearts, and new eyes, new ears, new tongues, new hands, new feet; *i. e.* a new converſation and practice; and they walk in newneſs of life, and continue to do ſo to the end of life. And they that fall away, and ceaſe viſibly to do ſo, it is a ſign they never were riſen with Chriſt.‡ And eſpecially when mens opinion of their being converted,

" offended." So Achan and Gehazi had ſingular opportunities to get an eſtate; if they live twenty years they are not like to have ſuch an advantage; and they force themſelves to borrow a point, and break the law of God. They lay a neceſſity on eſtate, and liberty, and life, but not upon obedience. If a man be willing to ſerve God in ordinary caſes, but excuſe himſelf when there be great difficulties, he is not godly. It is a ſmall matter to ſerve God when men have no temptation; but Lot was holy in Sodom. Noah was righteous in the old world. Temptations try men, but they do not force men to ſin: and grace will eſtabliſh the heart in a day of temptation. They are bleſſed that do endure temptation, James i. 12. But they are curſed that fall away in a day of temptation." *Stoddard's Way to know ſincerity and hypocriſy.*

‡ " Hence we learn what verdict to paſs and give in, concerning thoſe men that decay and fall off from the Lord. They never had oil in the veſſel; never had a dram of grace in their heart. Thus 1 John ii. 19. " If they had been of us, they would no doubt have " continued with us." It ſeems they were ſuch men, which were ſo eminent and excellent, as that there were no brands nor marks upon them, to give notice to the churches, that they were marked out for apoſtacy; but were only diſcovered to be unſound, by their apoſtaſy; and this was argument good enough." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 226.

converted, and ſo in a ſafe eſtate, is the very cauſe of their coming to this, it is a moſt evident ſign of their hypocriſy. † And that, whether their falling away be into their former ſins, or into ſome new kind of wickedneſs, having the corruption of nature only turned into a new channel, inſtead of its being mortified. As when perſons that think themſelves converted, though they do not return to former profaneneſs and lewdneſs; yet from the high opinion they have of their experiences, graces, and privileges, gradually ſettle more and more in a ſelf-righteous and ſpiritually proud temper of mind, and in ſuch a manner of behaviour and converſation, as naturally ariſes therefrom. When it is thus with men, however far they may ſeem to be from their former evil practices, this alone is enough to condemn them, and may render their laſt ſtate far worſe than the firſt. For this ſeems to be the very caſe of the Jews of that generation that Chriſt ſpeaks of, Matth. xii. 43, 44, 45. who having been awakened by John the baptiſt's preaching, and brought to a reformation of their former licentious courſes, whereby the unclean ſpirit was as it were turned out, and the houſe ſwept and garniſhed; yet being *empty* of God and of grace, became full of themſelves, and were exalted in an exceeding high opinion of their own righteouſneſs and eminent holineſs, and became habituated to an anſwerably ſelf-exalting behaviour; ſo changing the ſins of publicans and harlots, for thoſe of the Phariſees; and in the iſſue, had ſeven devils, worſe than the firſt. Thus

† "When a man's riſing is the cauſe of his fall, or ſeals a man up in his fall, or at leaſt the cauſe through his corruption. *Ex. Gr.* Time was, a man lived a looſe, careleſs, carnal life; by the miniſtry of ſome word, or reading of ſome book, or ſpeaking with ſome friend, he comes to be convinced of his miſery and woful condition, and ſees no good nor grace in himſelf; he hath been even hitherto deceived: at laſt he comes to get ſome light, ſome taſte, ſome ſorrows, ſome heart to uſe the means, ſome comfort, and mercy, and hope of life: and when it is thus with him, now he falls; he grows full and falls; and this riſing is the cauſe of his fall; his light is darkneſs and death to him; and grows to a form of knowlege; his riſing makes him fall to formality, and then to profaneneſs; and ſo his taſting ſatisfies him; his ſorrows empty his heart of ſorrow for ſin; and his ſorrows for his falls harden his heart in his falls; and all the means of recovering him harden him.—Look as it is in diſeaſes; if the phyſic and meat turns to be poiſon, then there is no hope of recovery; a man is ſick to death now. 'The ſaint's little meaſure makes him forget what is behind." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 226.

Thus I have explained what exercise and fruit I mean, when I say, that gracious affections have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice.

The reason why gracious affections have such a tendency and effect, appears from many things that have already been observed, in the preceding parts of this discourse.

The reason of it appears from this, that *gracious affections do arise from those operations and influences which are spiritual*, and that the inward principle from whence they flow, is something *divine*, a communication of God, a participation of the divine nature, Christ living in the heart, the holy Spirit dwelling there, in union with the faculties of the soul, as an internal vital principle, exerting his own proper nature, in the exercise of those faculties. This is sufficient to shew us why true grace should have such activity, power and efficacy. No wonder that which is divine, is powerful and effectual; for it has omnipotence on its side. If God dwells in the heart, and be vitally united to it, he will shew that he is a God, by the efficacy of his operation. Christ is not in the heart of a saint, as in a sepulchre, or as a dead saviour, that does nothing; but as in his temple, and as one that is alive from the dead. For in the heart where Christ savingly is, there he lives, and exerts himself after the power of that endless life, that he received at his resurrection. Thus every saint that is the subject of the benefit of Christ's sufferings, is made to know and experience the power of his resurrection. The Spirit of Christ, which is the immediate spring of grace in the heart, is all life, all power, all act; 2 Cor. ii. 4.—"In demonstration of the "Spirit, and of power." 1 Thess. i. 5. "Our gospel came not "unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy "Ghost." 1 Cor. iv. 20. "The kingdom of God is not in "word, but in power." Hence saving affections, though oftentimes they do not make so great a noise and show as others; yet have in them a secret solidity, life and strength, whereby they take hold of, and carry away the heart, leading it into a kind of captivity, 2 Cor. x. 5. gaining a full and stedfast determination of the will for God and holiness, Psal. cx. 3. "Thy "people shall be willing in the day of thy power." And thus it is that holy affections have a governing power in the course of a man's life. A statue may look very much like a real man, and a beautiful man; yea it may have, in its appearance to the eye, the resemblance of a very lively, strong and active man; but

yet

yet an inward principle of life and ſtrength is wanting; and therefore it does nothing, it brings nothing to paſs, there is no action or operation to anſwer the ſhew. Falſe diſcoveries and affections do not go deep enough, to reach and govern the ſpring of mens actions and practice. The ſeed in ſtony ground had not deepneſs of earth, and the root did not go deep enough to bring forth fruit. But gracious affections go to the very bottom of the heart, and take hold of the very inmoſt ſprings of life and activity. Herein chiefly appears the power of true godlineſs, *viz.* in its being effectual in practice. And the efficacy of godlineſs in this reſpect, is what the apoſtle has reſpect to, when he ſpeaks of the power of godlineſs, 2 Tim. iii. 5. as is very plain; for he there is particularly declaring, how ſome profeſſors of religion would notoriouſly fail in the practice of it, and then in the 5th verſe obſerves, that in being thus of an unholy practice, they deny the power of godlineſs, though they have the form of it. Indeed the power of godlineſs is exerted in the firſt place within the ſoul, in the ſenſible, lively exerciſe of gracious affections there. Yet the principal evidence of this power of godlineſs, is in thoſe exerciſes of holy affections that are practical, and in their being practical; in conquering the will, and conquering the luſts and corruptions of men, and carrying men on in the way of holineſs, through all temptation, difficulty and oppoſition.

Again, the reaſon why gracious affections have their exerciſe and effect in Chriſtian practice, appears from this, (which has alſo been before obſerved,) that *the firſt objective ground of gracious affections, is the tranſcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things, as they are in themſelves, and not any conceived relation they bear to ſelf, or ſelf-intereſt.* This ſhews why holy affections will cauſe men to be holy in their practice univerſally. What makes men partial in religion is, that they ſeek themſelves, and not God, in their religion, and cloſe with religion, not for its own excellent nature, but only to ſerve a turn. He that cloſes with religion only to ſerve a turn, will cloſe with no more of it than he imagines ſerves that turn: but he that cloſes with religion, for its own excellent and lovely nature, cloſes with all that has that nature: he that embraces religion for its own ſake, embraces the whole of religion. This alſo ſhews why gracious affections will cauſe men to practiſe religion perſeveringly, and at all times. Religion may alter greatly in proceſs of time, as to its conſiſtence with mens

private

private intereſt, in many reſpects; and therefore he that complies with it only from ſelfiſh views, is liable, in change of times, to forſake it: but the excellent nature of religion, as it is in itſelf, is invariable; it is always the ſame, at all times, and through all changes; it never alters in any reſpect.

The reaſon why gracious affections iſſue in holy practice, alſo further appears from the kind of excellency of divine things, that it has been obſerved is the foundation of all holy affections, *viz. their moral excellency, or the beauty of their holineſs.* No wonder that a love to holineſs, for holineſs ſake, inclines perſons to practiſe holineſs, and to practiſe every thing that is holy. Seeing holineſs is the main thing that excites, draws, and governs all gracious affections, no wonder that all ſuch affections tend to holineſs. That which men love, they deſire to have and to be united to, and poſſeſſed of. That beauty which men delight in, they deſire to be adorned with. Thoſe acts which men delight in, they neceſſarily incline to do.

And what has been obſerved of that *divine teaching and leading of the Spirit of God*, which there is in gracious affections, ſhews the reaſon of this tendency of ſuch affections to an univerſally holy practice. For as has been obſerved, the Spirit of God in this his divine teaching and leading, gives the ſoul a natural reliſh of the ſweetneſs of that which is holy, and of every thing that is holy, ſo far as it comes in view, and excites a diſreliſh and diſguſt of every thing that is unholy.

The ſame alſo appears from what has been obſerved of the nature of that *ſpiritual knowlege*, which is the foundation of all holy affection, as conſiſting in *a ſenſe and view of that excellency in divine things, which is ſupreme and tranſcendent.* For hereby theſe things appear above all others, worthy to be choſen and adhered to. By the ſight of the tranſcendent glory of Chriſt, true Chriſtians ſee him worthy to be followed; and ſo are powerfully drawn after him; they ſee him worthy that they ſhould forſake all for him: by the ſight of that ſuperlative amiableneſs, they are thoroughly diſpoſed to be ſubject to him, and engaged to labour with earneſtneſs and activity in his ſervice, and made willing to go through all difficulties for his ſake. And it is the diſcovery of this divine excellency of Chriſt, that makes them conſtant to him: for it makes a deep impreſſion upon their minds, that they cannot forget him; and they will follow him whitherſoever he goes, and it is in vain for any to endeavor to draw them away from him.

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The reaſon of this practical tendency and iſſue of gracious affections, further appears, from what has been obſerved of ſuch affections being *attended with a thorough conviction of the judgment, of the reality and certainty of divine things.* No wonder that they who were never thoroughly convinced that there is any reality in the things of religion, will never be at the labor and trouble of ſuch an earneſt, univerſal and perſevering practice of religion, through all difficulties, ſelf-denials and ſufferings, in a dependence on that, which they are not convinced of. But on the other hand, they who are thoroughly convinced of the certain truth of thoſe things, muſt needs be governed by them in their practice; for the things revealed in the word of God are ſo great, and ſo infinitely more important than all other things, that it is inconſiſtent with the human nature, that a man ſhould fully believe the truth of them, and not be influenced by them above all things, in his practice.

Again, the reaſon of this expreſſion and effect of holy affections in the practice, appears from what has been obſerved of *a change of nature, accompanying ſuch affections.* Without a change of nature, mens practice will not be thoroughly changed. Until the tree be made good, the fruit will not be good. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thiſtles. The ſwine may be waſhed, and appear clean for a little while, but yet, without a change of nature, he will ſtill wallow in the mire. Nature is a more powerful principle of action, than any thing that oppoſes it: though it may be violently reſtrained for a while, it will finally overcome that which reſtrains it: it is like the ſtream of a river, it may be ſtopped a while with a dam, but if nothing be done to dry the fountain, it will not be ſtopped always; it will have a courſe, either in its old channel, or a new one. Nature is a thing more conſtant and permanent, than any of thoſe things that are the foundation of carnal mens reformation and righteouſneſs. When a natural man denies his luſt, and lives a ſtrict, religious life, and ſeems humble, painful and earneſt in religion; it is not natural, it is all a force againſt nature; as when a ſtone is violently thrown upwards; but that force will be gradually ſpent; yet nature will remain in its full ſtrength, and ſo prevails again, and the ſtone returns downwards. As long as corrupt nature is not mortified, but the principle left whole in a man, it is a vain thing to expect that it ſhould not govern. But if the old nature

ture be indeed mortified, and a new and heavenly nature infuſed; then may it well be expected, that men will walk in newneſs of life, and continue to do ſo to the end of their days.

The reaſon of this practical exerciſe and effect of holy affections, may alſo be partly ſeen, from what has been ſaid of that *ſpirit of humility, which attends them.* Humility is that wherein a ſpirit of obedience does much conſiſt. A proud ſpirit is a rebellious ſpirit, but an humble ſpirit is a yieldable, ſubject, obediential ſpirit. We ſee among men, that the ſervant who is of a haughty ſpirit, is not apt in every thing to be ſubmiſſive and obedient to the will of his maſter; but it is otherwiſe with that ſervant who is of a lowly ſpirit.

And that *lamb-like, dove-like ſpirit*, that has been ſpoken of, which accompanies all gracious affections, fulfils (as the apoſtle obſerves, Rom. xiii. 8, 9, 10. and Gal. v. 14.) all the duties of the ſecond table of the law; wherein Chriſtian practice does very much conſiſt, and wherein the external practice of Chriſtianity chiefly conſiſts.

And the reaſon why gracious affections are attended with that ſtrict, univerſal and conſtant obedience which has been ſpoken of, further appears, from what has been obſerved of that *tenderneſs of ſpirit*, which accompanies the affections of true ſaints, cauſing in them ſo quick and lively a ſenſe of pain, through the preſence of moral evil, and ſuch a dread of the appearance of evil.

And one great reaſon why the Chriſtian practice which flows from gracious affections, is univerſal, and conſtant; and perſevering, appears from what has been obſerved of thoſe affections themſelves, from whence this practice flows, being univerſal and conſtant, in all kinds of holy exerciſes, and towards all objects, and in all circumſtances, and at all ſeaſons, *in a beautiful ſymmetry and proportion.*

And much of the reaſon why holy affections are expreſſed and manifeſted in ſuch an earneſtneſs, activity, and engagedneſs and perſeverance in holy practice, as has been ſpoken of, appears from what has been obſerved, of the ſpiritual appetite and longing after further attainments in religion, which evermore attends true affection, and does not decay, but increaſes as thoſe affections increaſe.

Thus we ſee how the tendency of holy affections to ſuch a Chriſtian practice as has been explained, appears from each of thoſe characteriſtics of holy affection, that have been before ſpoken of.

And

And this point may be further illuſtrated and confirmed, if it be conſidered, that the holy ſcriptures do abundantly place ſincerity and ſoundneſs in religion, in making a full choice of God as our only Lord and portion, forſaking all for him, and in a full determination of the will for God and Chriſt, on counting the coſt; in our hearts cloſing and complying with the religion of Jeſus Chriſt, with all that belongs to it, embracing it with all its difficulties, as it were hating our deareſt earthly enjoyments, and even our own lives, for Chriſt; giving up ourſelves, with all that we have, wholly and for ever, unto Chriſt, without keeping back any thing, or making any reſerve; or, in one word, in the great duty of *ſelf-denial* for Chriſt; or in denying, *i. e.* as it were diſowning and renouncing ourſelves for him, making ourſelves nothing that he may be all. See the texts to this purpoſe referred to in the margin *. Now ſurely having an heart to forſake all for Chriſt, tends to actually forſaking all for him, ſo far as there is occaſion, and we have the trial. An having an heart to deny ourſelves for Chriſt, tends to a denying ourſelves in deed, when Chriſt and ſelf-intereſt ſtand in competition. A giving up ourſelves, with all that we have, in our hearts, without making any reſerve there, tends to our behaving ourſelves univerſally as his, as ſubject to his will, and devoted to his ends. Our hearts entirely cloſing with the religion of Jeſus, with all that belongs to it, and as attended with all its difficulties, upon a deliberate counting the coſt, tends to an univerſal cloſing with the ſame in act and deed, and actually going through all the difficulties that we meet with in the way of religion, and ſo holding out with patience and perſeverance.

The tendency of grace in the heart to holy practice, is very direct, and the connection moſt natural, cloſe, and neceſſary.

True

* Matth. v. 29, 30. Chap. vi. 24. Chap. viii. 19—22. Chap. iv. 18, to 22. Chap. x. 37, 38, 39. Chap. xiii. 44, 45, 46. Chap. xvi. 24, 25, 26. Chap. xviii. 8, 9. Chap. xix. 21, 27, 28, 29. Luke v. 27, 28. Chap. x. 42. Chap. xii. 33, 34. Chap. xiv. 16—20, 25, —33. Chap. xvi. 13. Acts iv. 34, 35. with Chap. v. 1—11. Rom. vi. 3—8. Gal. ii. 20. Chap. vi. 14. Phillip. iii. 7—10. Jam. i. 8, 9, 10. Chap. iv. 4. 1 John ii. 15. Rev. xiv. 4. Gen. xii. 1——4. with Heb. xi. 8, 9, 10. Gen. xxii. 12. and Heb. xi. 17. Chap. xi. 24—27. Deut. xiii. 6. and Chap. xxxiii. 9. Ruth i. 6——16. with Pſal. xlv. 10, 11. and 2 Sam. xv. 19—22. Pſal. lxxiii. 25. Pſal. xvi. 5, 6. Lam. iii. 24. Jer. x. 16.

True grace is not an unactive thing; there is nothing in heaven or earth of a more active nature; for it is life itself, and the most active kind of life, even spiritual and divine life. It is no barren thing; there is nothing in the universe that in its nature has a greater tendency to fruit. Godliness in the heart has as direct a relation to practice, as a fountain has to a stream, or as the luminous nature of the sun has to beams sent forth, or as life has to breathing, or the beating of the pulse, or any other vital act; or as a habit or principle of action has to action: for it is the very nature and notion of grace, that it is a principle of holy action or practice. Regeneration, which is that work of God in which grace is infused, has a direct relation to practice; for it is the very end of it, with a view to which the whole work is wrought: all is calculated and framed, in this mighty and manifold change wrought in the soul, so as directly to tend to this end; Eph. ii. 10. "For we are "his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Yea it is the very end of the redemption of Christ; Tit. ii. 14. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all "iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous "of good works." 2 Cor. v. 15. "He died for all, that they "which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but "unto him who died for them, and rose again." Heb. ix. 14. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the "eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge "your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Col. i. 21, 22. "And you that were sometimes alienated, and "enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he "reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present "you holy and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight." 1 Pet. i. 18. "For as much as ye know that ye were not re- "deemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your "vain conversation."—Luke i. 74, 75. "That he would grant "unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our ene- "mies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteous- "ness before him, all the days of our life." God often speaks of holy practice, as the end of that great typical redemption, the redemption from Egyptian bondage; as Exod. iv. 23. "Let my "son go, that he may serve me." So chap. iv. 23. and vii. 16. and viii. 1, 20. and ix. 1, 13. and x. 3. And this is also declared to be the end of election; John xv. 16. "Ye have not chosen "me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go

"and

" and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit ſhould remain." Eph. i. 4. " According as he hath choſen us in him, before " the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and " without blame before him in love." Chap. ii. 10. " Crea- " ted unto good works, which God hath foreordained that " we ſhould walk in them." Holy practice is as much the end of all that God does about his ſaints, as fruit is the end of all the huſbandman does about the growth of his field or vineyard: as the matter is often repreſented in ſcripture; Matth. iii. 10. chap. xiii. 8, 23—30, 38. chap. xxi. 19, 33, 34. Luke xiii. 6. John xv. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8. 1 Cor. iii. 9. Heb. vi. 7, 8. Iſ. v. 1—8. Cant. viii. 11, 12. Iſ. xxvii. 2, 3. † And therefore every thing in a true Chriſtian is calculated to reach this end. This fruit of holy practice, is what every grace, and every diſcovery, and every individual thing, which belongs to Chriſtian experience, has a direct tendency to. *

† " To profeſs to know much is eaſy; but to bring your affections into ſubjection, to wreſtle with luſts, to croſs your wills and yourſelves, upon every occaſion, this is hard. The Lord looketh, that in our lives we ſhould be ſerviceable to him, and uſeful to men. That which is within, the Lord and our brethren are never the better for it: but the outward obedience, flowing thence, glorifieth God, and does good to men. The Lord will have this done. What elſe is the end of our planting and watering, but that the trees may be filled with ſap? And what is the end of that ſap, but that the trees may bring forth fruit? What careth the huſbandman for leaves, and barren trees?" *Dr. Preſton of the Church's Carriage.*

* " What is the end of every grace, but to mollify the heart, and make it pliable to ſome command or other? Look, how many commandments, ſo many graces there are in virtue and efficacy, although not ſo many ſeveral names are given them. The end of every ſuch grace is to make us obedient: as the end of temperance is chaſtity, to bow the heart to theſe commands, *Be ye ſober*, &c. *not in chambering and wantonneſs*, &c. When the Lord commandeth us not to be angry with our brother, the end of meekneſs, and why the Lord infuſeth it, is to keep us from unadviſed raſh anger. So faith, the end of it is to take Jeſus Chriſt, to make us obedient to the command of the goſpel, which commands us to believe in him. So as all graces do join together, but to frame and faſhion the ſoul to obedience; then ſo much obedience as is in your lives, ſo much grace in your hearts, and no more. Therefore aſk your hearts, how ſubject you are to the Lord in your lives? It was the counſel that Francis Spira gave to them about him, ſaith he, Learn all of me to take heed of ſevering faith

The conſtant and indiſſoluble connection that there is between a Chriſtian principle and profeſſion in the true ſaints, and the fruit of holy practice in their lives, was typified of old in the frame of the golden candleſtick in the temple. It is beyond doubt that that golden candleſtick, with its ſeven branches and ſeven lamps, was a type of the church of Chriſt. The Holy Ghoſt himſelf, has been pleaſed to put that matter out of doubt, by repreſenting his church by ſuch a golden candleſtick, with ſeven lamps, in the fourth chapter of Zechariah, and repreſenting the ſeven churches of Aſia by ſeven golden candleſticks, in the chapter of the Revelation. That golden candleſtick in the temple was every where, throughout its whole frame, made with *knops and flowers*, Exod. xxv. 31. to the end, and chap. xxxvii. 17—24. The word tranſlated *knop*, in the original ſignifies apple or pomegranate. There was a *knop and a flower, a knop and a flower:* where-ever there was a flower, there was an apple or pomegranate with it: the flower and the fruit were conſtantly connected, without fail. The flower contained the principles of the fruit, and a beautiful promiſing appearance of it; and it never was a deceitful appearance; the principle or ſhew of fruit had evermore real fruit attending it, or ſucceeding it. So it is in the church of Chriſt: there is the principle of fruit in grace in the heart; and there is an amiable profeſſion, ſignified by the open flowers of the candleſtick; and there is anſwerable fruit, in holy practice, conſtantly attending this principle and profeſſion. Every branch of the golden candleſtick, thus compoſed of golden apples and flowers, was crowned with a burning, ſhining lamp on the top of it. For it is by this means that the ſaints ſhine as lights in the world, by making a fair and good profeſſion of religion, and having their profeſſion evermore joined with anſwerable fruit in practice; agreeable to that of our Saviour, Matt. v. 15, 16. " Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a " buſhel,

and obedience; I taught juſtification by faith, but neglected obedience; and therefore is this befallen me. I have known ſome godly men, whoſe comfort on their death-beds hath been not from the inward acts of their minds, which apart conſidered, might be ſubject to miſapprehenſions, but from the courſe of obedience in their lives, iſſuing thence. Let Chriſtians look to it, that in all their converſation, as they ſtand in every relation, as ſcholars, tradeſmen, huſbands, wives, look to this, that when they come to die, they have been ſubject in all things. This will yield comfort." *Dr. Preſton's Church's Carriage.*

" bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that " are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that " they may SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, and glorify your Fa- " ther which is in heaven." A fair and beautiful profession, and golden fruits accompanying one another, are the amiable ornaments of the true church of Christ. Therefore we find that apples and flowers were not only the ornaments of the candlestick in the temple, but of the temple itself, which is a type of the church; which the apostle tells us, *is the temple of the living God.* See 1 Kings vi. 18. " And the cedar of the house " within was carved with knops, and open flowers." The ornaments and crown of the pillars, at the entrance of the temple, were of the same sort: they were lilies and pomegranates, or flowers and fruits mixed together, 1 Kings vii. 18, 19. So it is with all those that are *as pillars in the temple of God, who shall go no more out*, or never be ejected as intruders; as it is with all true saints; Rev. iii. 12. " Him that overcometh, " will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall " go no more out."

Much the same thing seems to be signified by the ornaments on the skirt of the ephod, the garment of Aaron the high priest; which were golden bells and pomegranates. That these skirts of Aaron's garment represent the church, or the saints, (that are as it were the garment of Christ), is manifest, for they are evidently so spoken of, Psal. cxxxiii. 1, 2. " Behold, how good " and how pleasant it is, for brethren, to dwell together in unity! " It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down " upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the " skirts of his garments." That ephod of Aaron signified the same with the seamless coat of Christ our great High Priest. As Christ's coat had no seam, but was woven from the top throughout, so it was with the ephod, Exod. xxxix. 22. As God took care in his providence, that Christ's coat should not be rent; so God took special care that the ephod should not be rent; Exod. xxviii. 32. and chap. xxxix. 23. The golden bells on this ephod, by their precious matter and pleasant sound, do well represent the good profession that the saints make; and the pomegranates, the fruit they bring forth. And as in the hem of the ephod, bells and pomegranates were constantly connected, as is once and again observed, there was *a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate*, Exod. xxviii. 34. and chap. xxxix. 26: so it is in the true saints;

their

their good profeſſion and their good fruit, do conſtantly accompany one another: the fruit they bring forth in life, evermore anſwers the pleaſant ſound of their profeſſion.

Again, the very ſame thing is repreſented by Chriſt, in his deſcription of his ſpouſe, Cant. vii. 2. "Thy belly is like an "heap of wheat, ſet about with lilies." Here again are beautiful flowers, and good fruit, accompanying one another.—The lilies were fair and beautiful flowers, and the wheat was good fruit.

As this fruit of Chriſtian practice is evermore found in true ſaints, according as they have opportunity and trial, ſo it is found in them only; none but true Chriſtians do live ſuch an obedient life, ſo univerſally devoted to their duty, and given up to the buſineſs of a Chriſtian, as has been explained. All unſanctified men are *workers of iniquity:* they are of their father the devil, and the luſts of their father they will do. There is no hypocrite that will go through with the buſineſs of religion, and both begin and finiſh the tour; they will not endure the trials God is wont to bring on the profeſſors of religion, but will turn aſide to their crooked ways: they will not be thoroughly faithful to Chriſt in their practice, and follow him whitherſoever he goes. Whatever lengths they may go in religion in ſome inſtances, and though they may appear exceeding ſtrict, and mightily engaged in the ſervice of God for a ſeaſon; yet they are ſervants to ſin; the chains of their old taſk-maſters are not broken: their luſts yet have a reigning power in their hearts; and therefore to theſe maſters they will bow down again.* Dan. xii. 10. "Many ſhall be purified, and

"made

* "No unregenerate man, though he go never ſo far, let him do never ſo much, but he lives in ſome one ſin or other, ſecret or open, little or great. Judas went far, but he was covetous: Herod went far, but he loved his Herodias. Every dog hath his kennel; every ſwine hath his ſwill; and every wicked man his luſt." *Shepard's Sincere convert*, iſt edition, p. 96.

"There is never an unſound heart in the world, but as they ſay of witches, they have ſome familiar that ſucks them, ſo they have ſome luſt that is beloved of them, ſome beloved there is they have given a promiſe to, never to forſake." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 15.

"No man that is married to the law, but his fig-leaves cover ſome nakedneſs. All his duties ever brood ſome luſt. There is ſome one ſin or other the man lives in; which either the Lord diſcovers, and he

will

" made white, and tried: but the wicked will do wickedly:
" and none of the wicked ſhall underſtand." Iſ. xxvi. 10.
" Let favor be ſhewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn
" righteouſneſs: in the land of uprightneſs will he deal unjuſt-
" ly." Iſ. xxxv. 8. " And an high-way ſhall be there, and
" a way, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs; the unclean
" ſhall not paſs over it." Hoſ. xiv. 9. " The ways of the
" Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them: but the
" tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therein." Job xxvii. 8, 9, 10. " What
" is the hope of the hypocrite?—Will he delight himſelf in
" the Almighty? will he always call upon God?" An un-
ſanctified

will not part with, as the young man; or elſe is ſo ſpiritual, he cannot ſee all his life-time. Read through the ſtricteſt of all, and ſee this, Matt. xxii. " Painted ſepulchres." Paul that was blameleſs, yet (Eph. ii. 3. Tit. iii. 3.) *ſerved divers luſts and pleaſures*. And the reaſon is, the law is not the miniſtration of the ſpirit, 2 Cor. iii. 8, 9. which breaks off from every ſin. There is no law that can give life, Gal. iii. 21. and hence many men have ſtrong reſolutions, and break all again. Hence men ſin and ſorrow, and pray again, and then go with more eaſe in their ſin. Examine thyſelf; is there any living luſt with thy righteouſneſs? It is ſure, it is a righteouſneſs thou art married to, and never wert yet matched to Chriſt." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 19, 20.

" No hypocrite, though he cloſeth with Chriſt, and for a time grow up in knowlege of, and communion with Chriſt, but he hath at that time hidden luſts and thorns that overgrow his growings, and choke all at laſt, and in concluſion mediates a league between Chriſt and his luſts, and ſeeks to reconcile them together." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 109.

" ——Their faith is in ſuch a party, as never was yet thoroughly rent from ſin. And here is the great wound of the moſt cunning hypocrites living.—Let a man be caſt down as low as hell with ſorrow, and lie under chains, quaking in apprehenſion of terror to come; let a man then be raiſed up to heaven in joy, not able to live; let a man reform and ſhine like an earthly angel; yet if not rent from luſt, that either you did never ſee it, or if ſo, you have not followed the Lord to remove it, but proud, dogged, worldly, ſluggiſh ſtill, falſe in your dealings, cunning in your tradings, devils in your families, images in your churches; you are objects of pity now, and ſhall be of terror at the great day. For where ſin remains in power, it will bring faith, and Chriſt, and joy into bondage and ſervice of itſelf." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 125.

" Me thinks it is with the beſt hypocrites, as it is with divers old merchants: they prize and deſire the gain of merchandize; but to

be

ſanctified man may hide his ſin, and may in many things ar
for a ſeaſon refrain from ſin; but he will not be brought
nally to renounce his ſin, and give it a bill of divorce: ſin
too dear to him, for him to be willing for that: "Wickedne
"is ſweet in his mouth;" and therefore "he hides it unde
"his tongue; he ſpares it, and forſakes it not; but keeps
"ſtill within his mouth," Job xx. 12, 13. Herein chiefl
conſiſts the ſtraitneſs of the gate, and the narrowneſs of the wa
that leads to life; upon the account of which, carnal men wi
not go in thereat, *viz.* that it is a way of utterly denying an
finally renouncing all ungodlineſs, and ſo a way of *ſelf-denia*
or *ſelf-renunciation*. Many

be at the trouble to prepare the ſhip, to put themſelves upon the hazard
and dangers of the ſhip, to go and fetch the treaſure that they prize, thi
they will never do. So many prize and deſire earneſtly the treaſures o
heaven; but to be at the trouble of a heaven voyge to fetch this trea
ſure, to paſs through the valley of Baca, tears, temptations, the power
of darkneſs, the breaches, oppoſition and contradictions of a ſinful un
believing heart, good and evil report, to paſs from one depth and
wave to another, this the beſt hypocrite fails in: and hence loſes all a
laſt. And this I conceive to be one of the great differences betwee
the ſtrong deſires and eſteems of hypocrites and ſaints.—Look, as it
is with men that have two trades, or two ſhops; one is as much as
ever they can follow or tend; they are forced at laſt to put off one,
and they muſt neglect one; ſo here.—That ſpirit of ſloth and ſlumber,
which the Lord ever leaves the beſt hypocrite to, ſo mightily oppreſ-
ſeth all their ſenſes, that they cannot uſe effectually all means to ac-
compliſh their ends. And hence a man deſires the end, but has it
not; Prov. xiii. 4." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 150, 151.

"Read through all the ſcripture; conſtantly, never any hypo-
crites but they had this brand, Matth. vii. 22. "You workers of
"iniquity." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 195.

"A carnal man may hit upon ſome good duty that God com-
mands, and refrain ſome ſin that God forbids; but to go through,
he cannot: to take up reproach and diſgrace, to loſe his credit, to
forſake his friends, to loſe honor, and riches, and pleaſures; this
he will not do, until he be humbled." *Dr. Preſton on Paul's con-
verſion.*

"So it is with men, becauſe they want humiliation. Therefore
their *profeſſion* and *they* do not continue, but part willingly one from
another. They will do ſome things, but not all things: and they
will forego ſome things, but not all things. And therefore our Sa-
viour ſaith, Luke xiv. "He that will not forſake all for my ſake,
"is not worthy of me." He is not worth the ſaving, that prizes not
me above all things whatſoever. And a man will not prize Chriſt,
nor forſake all things for Chriſt, until he be humbled." *ibid.*

Many natural men, under the means that are uſed with them, and God's ſtrivings with them to bring them to forſake their ſins, do by their ſins, as Pharaoh did by his pride and covetouſneſs, which he gratified by keeping the children of Iſrael in bondage, when God ſtrove with him to bring him to let the people go. When God's hand preſſed Pharaoh ſore, and he was exerciſed with fears of God's future wrath, he entertained ſome thoughts of letting the people go, and promiſed he would do it; but from time to time he broke his promiſes, when he ſaw there was reſpite. When God filled Egypt with thunder and lightening, and the fire ran along the ground, then Pharaoh is brought to confeſs his ſin with ſeeming humility, and to have a great reſolution to let the people go, Exod, ix. 27, 28. "And "Pharaoh ſent, and called for Moſes and Aaron, and ſaid unto "them, I have ſinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I "and my people are wicked: intreat the Lord (for it is enough) "that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I "will let you go, and ye ſhall ſtay no longer." So ſinners are ſometimes by thunders and lightenings, and great terrors of the law, brought to a ſeeming work of humiliation, and to appearance to part with their ſins; but are no more thoroughly brought to a diſpoſition to diſmiſs them, than Pharaoh was to let the people go. Pharaoh in the ſtruggle that was between his conſcience and his luſts, was for contriving that God might be ſerved, and he enjoy his luſts that were gratified by the ſlavery of the people, too. Moſes inſiſted that Iſrael's God ſhould be ſerved and ſacrificed to: Pharaoh was willing to conſent to that; but would have it done without his parting with the people; *Go ſacrifice to your God in the land*, ſays he, Exod. viii. 25. So, many ſinners are for contriving to ſerve God, and enjoy their luſts too. Moſes objected againſt complying with Pharaoh's propoſal, that ſerving God, and yet continuing in Egypt under their taſk-maſters, did not agree together, and were inconſiſtent one with another; (there is no ſerving God, and continuing ſlaves to ſuch enemies of God at the ſame time.) After this Pharaoh conſented to let the people go, provided they would not go far away: he was not willing to part with them finally, and therefore would have them within reach. So do many hypocrites with reſpect to their ſins. Afterwards Pharaoh conſented to let the *men* go, if they would leave the *women* and *children*, Exod. x. 8, 9, 10. And then after that, when God's hand was yet harder upon him, he conſented that

they

they ſhould go, even *women* and *children*, as well as *men*, provided they would leave their *cattle* behind: but he was not willing to let them go, and all that they had, Exod. x. 24. So it oftentimes is with ſinners; they are willing to part with ſome of their ſins, but not all; they are brought to part with the more groſs acts of ſin, but not to part with their luſts, in leſſer indulgencies of them. Whereas we muſt part with all our ſins, little and great; and all that belongs to them, *men women, children*, and *cattle:* they muſt all be let go, with *their young, and with their old, with their ſons, and with their daughters, with their flocks, and with their herds, there muſt not be an hoof left behind*; as Moſes told Pharaoh, with reſpect to the children of Iſrael. At laſt, when it came to extremity, Pharaoh conſented to let the people all go, and all that they had; but he was not ſtedfaſtly of that mind; he ſoon repented, and purſued after them again: and the reaſon was, that thoſe luſts of pride and covetouſneſs, that were gratified by Pharaoh's dominion over the people, and the gains of their ſervice, were never really mortified in him, but only violently reſtrained. And thus, he being guilty of backſliding, after his ſeeming compliance with God's commands, was deſtroyed without remedy. Thus there may be a forced parting with ways of diſobedience to the commands of God, that may ſeem to be univerſal, as to what appears, for a little ſeaſon: but becauſe it is a mere force, without the mortification of the inward principle of ſin, they will not perſevere in it; but will return as the dog to his vomit; and ſo bring on themſelves dreadful and remedileſs deſtruction. There were many falſe diſciples in Chriſt's time, that followed him for a while; but none of them followed him to the end; but ſome on one occaſion, and ſome on another, went back and walked no more with him.*

From

* "The counterfeit and common grace of fooliſh virgins, after ſome time of glorious profeſſion, will certainly go out and be quite ſpent. It conſumes in the uſing, and ſhining, and burning.—Men that have been moſt forward, decay; their gifts decay, life decays.—It is ſo, after ſome time of profeſſion: for at firſt, it rather grows than decays and withers: but afterward they have enough of it, it withers and dies.—The Spirit of God comes upon many hypocrites, in abundant and plentiful meaſure of awakening grace; it comes upon them, as it did upon Balaam, and as it is in overflowing waters, which ſpread far, and grow very deep, and fill many empty places.

—Though

From what has been ſaid, it is manifeſt, that Chriſtian practice, or a holy life, is *a great and diſtinguiſhing ſign* of true and ſaving grace. But I may go further, and aſſert, that it is *the chief* of all the ſigns of grace, both as an evidence of the ſincerity of profeſſors unto others, and alſo to their own conſciences.

But then it is neceſſary that this be rightly taken, and that it be well underſtood and obſerved, in what ſenſe and manner Chriſtian practice is the *greateſt ſign* of grace. Therefore, to ſet this matter in a clear light, I will endeavour particularly and diſtinctly to prove, that Chriſtian practice is the *principal ſign* by which Chriſtians are to judge, both of their own and others ſincerity of godlineſs; withal obſerving ſome things that are needful to be particularly noted, in order to a right underſtanding of this matter.

—Though it doth come upon them ſo, yet it doth never reſt within, ſo as to dwell there, to take up an eternal manſion for himſelf.—— Hence it doth decay by little and little; until at laſt it is quite gone: As ponds filled with rain-water, which comes upon them; not ſpring-water, that riſeth up within them; it dries up by little and little, until quite dry." *Shepard's Parable*, Part II. p. 58, 59.

" Some men may apprehend Chriſt, neither out of fear of miſery, nor only to preſerve ſome ſin; but God lets in light and heat of the bleſſed beams of the glorious goſpel of the Son of God: and therefore there is mercy, rich, free, ſweet, for damned, great, vile ſinners: Good Lord, ſaith the ſoul, what a ſweet miniſtry, word, God, and goſpel is this! and there reſts. This was the frame of the ſtony-ground; which heard the word, and received it with joy, and for a time believed. And this is the caſe of thouſands, that are much affected with the promiſe and mercy of Chriſt, and hang upon free grace for a time: but as it is with ſweet ſmells in a room, they continue not long; or as flowers, they grow old and withered, and then fall. In time of temptation, luſt, and world, and ſloth is more ſweet than Chriſt, and all his goſpel is." *Shepard's Parable*, Part II. p. 168.

" Never any carnal heart, but ſome root of bitterneſs did grow up at laſt in this ſoil. *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 195.

" We ſhall ſee in experience: take the beſt profeſſors living; though they may come, as they and others judged, to the Lord, and follow the Lord; yet they will in time depart.—The Spirit never was given effectually to draw them; nor yet to keep them." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 205.

1. I ſhall conſider Chriſtian practice and an holy life, as a manifeſtation and ſign of the ſincerity of a profeſſing Chriſtian, *to the eye of his neighbours* and brethren.

And that this is the *chief ſign* of grace in this reſpect, is very evident from the word of God. Chriſt, who knew beſt how to give us rules to judge of others, has repeated it and inculcated it, that we ſhould know them by their fruits: Matth. vii. 16. "Ye ſhall know them by their fruits." And then after arguing the point, and giving clear reaſons why it muſt needs be, that mens fruits muſt be the chief evidence of what ſort they are, in the following verſes, he cloſes by repeating the aſſertion; verſ. 20. "Wherefore by their fruits ye ſhall know "them." Again chap. xii. 33. "Either make the tree good, "and his fruit good; or elſe make the tree corrupt, and his "fruit corrupt." As much as to ſay, it is a very abſurd thing, for any to ſuppoſe that the tree is good, and yet the fruit bad, that the tree is of one ſort, and the fruit of another; for the proper evidence of the nature of the tree is its fruit. Nothing elſe can be intended by that laſt clauſe in the verſe, *For the tree is known by its fruit*, than that the tree is chiefly known by its fruit, that this is the main and moſt proper diagnoſtic by which one tree is diſtinguiſhed from another. So Luke vi. 44. "Every tree "is known by his own fruit." Chriſt no where ſays, Ye ſhall know the tree by its leaves or flowers, or ye ſhall know men by their talk, or ye ſhall know them by the good ſtory they tell of their experiences, or ye ſhall know them by the manner and air of their ſpeaking, and emphaſis and pathos of expreſſion, or by their ſpeaking feelingly, or by making a very great ſhow by abundance of talk, or by many tears and affectionate expreſſions, or by the affections ye feel in your hearts towards them: but by *their fruits ſhall ye know them; the tree is known by its fruit; every tree is known by its own fruit.* And as this is the evidence that Chriſt has directed us mainly to look at in others, in judging of them, ſo it is the evidence that Chriſt has mainly directed us to give to others, whereby they may judge of us; Matth. v. 16. "Let your light ſo ſhine before men, "that others ſeeing your good works, may glorify your Father "which is in heaven." Here Chriſt directs us to manifeſt our godlineſs to others. Godlineſs is as it were a light that ſhines in the ſoul: Chriſt directs that this light ſhould not only ſhine within, but that it ſhould *ſhine* out *before men*, that they may ſee it. But which way ſhall this be? It is by your good works.

works. Chriſt doth not ſay, that others hearing your good words, your good ſtory, or your pathetical expreſſions; but *that others ſeeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Doubtleſs when Chriſt gives us a rule how to make our light ſhine, that others may have evidence of it, his rule is the beſt that is to be found. And the apoſtles do mention a Chriſtian practice, as the principal ground of their eſteem of perſons as true Chriſtians. As the apoſtle Paul, in the 6th chapter of Hebrews. There the apoſtle, in the beginning of the chapter, ſpeaks of them that have great common illuminations, that have *been enlightened, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,* that *afterwards fall away,* and are like barren ground, *that is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned:* and then immediately adds in the 9th verſe, (expreſſing his charity for the Chriſtian Hebrews, as having that ſaving grace, which is better than all theſe common illuminations,) *But, beloved, we are perſuaded better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation; though we thus ſpeak.* And then in the next verſe, he tells them what was the reaſon he had ſuch good thoughts of them: he does not ſay, that it was becauſe they had given him a good account of a work of God upon their ſouls, and talked very experimentally; but it was their work, and labour of love; *for God is not unrighteous, to forget your work, and labour of love, which ye have ſhewed towards his name, in that ye have miniſtered to the ſaints, and do miniſter.* And the ſame apoſtle ſpeaks of a faithful ſerving God in practice, as the proper proof to others of mens loving Chriſt above all, and preferring his honor to their private intereſt, Phil. ii. 21, 22. "For "all ſeek their own, not the things which are Jeſus Chriſt's: "but ye know the proof of him, that as a ſon with the father, "he hath ſerved with me in the goſpel." So the apoſtle John expreſſes the ſame, as the ground of his good opinion of Gaius, 3 John 3—6. "For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came "and teſtified of the truth that is in thee." But how did the brethren teſtify of the truth that was in Gaius? and how did the apoſtle judge of the truth that was in him? it was not becauſe they teſtified that he had given them a good account of the ſteps of his experiences, and talked like one that felt what he ſaid, and had the very language of a Chriſtian: but they teſtified, *that he walked in the truth:* as it follows, *even as thou*

walkeſt

walkeſt in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth. Beloved, thou doſt faithfully whatſoever thou doſt to the brethren, and to ſtrangers; which have borne witneſs of thy charity before the church. Thus the apoſtle explains what the brethren had borne witneſs of, when they *came and teſtified of his walking in the truth.* And the apoſtle ſeems in this ſame place, to give it as a rule to Gaius how he ſhould judge of others: in verſe 10. he mentions one Diotrephes, that did not carry himſelf well, and led away others after him; and then in the 11th verſe, he directs Gaius to beware of ſuch, and not to follow them; and gives him a rule whereby he may know them, exactly agreeable to that rule Chriſt had given before, *by their fruits ye ſhall know them*; ſays the apoſtle, *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doth good, is of God: but he that doth evil, hath not ſeen God.* And I would further obſerve, that the apoſtle James, expreſsly comparing that way of ſhewing others our faith and Chriſtianity by our practice or works, with other ways of ſhewing our faith without works, or not by works, does plainly and abundantly prefer the former; James ii. 18. "Yea, a man may ſay, Thou haſt faith, and I have works: "ſhew me thy faith without thy works, and I will ſhew thee "my faith by my works." A manifeſtation of our faith *without works*, or in a way diverſe from works, is a manifeſtation of it in *words*, whereby a man profeſſes faith. As the apoſtle ſays, verſe 14. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a "man SAY he hath faith?"—Therefore here are two ways of manifeſting to our neighbour what is in our hearts; one by what we *ſay*, and the other by what we *do*. But the apoſtle abundantly prefers the latter as the beſt evidence. Now certainly all accounts we give of ourſelves in words, our ſaying that we have faith, and that we are converted, and telling the manner how we came to have faith, and the ſteps by which it was wrought, and the diſcoveries and experiences that accompanied it, are ſtill but manifeſting our faith by what we *ſay*; it is but ſhewing our faith by our *words*; which the apoſtle ſpeaks of as falling vaſtly ſhort of manifeſting of it by what we do, and ſhewing our faith by our *works*.

And as the ſcripture plainly teaches, that practice is the beſt evidence of the ſincerity of profeſſing Chriſtians; ſo reaſon teaches the ſame thing. Reaſon ſhews, that mens deeds are better and more faithful interpreters of their minds, than their words.

words. The common ſenſe of all mankind, through all ages and nations, teaches them to judge of mens hearts chiefly by their practice, in other matters: as, whether a man be a loyal ſubject, a true lover, a dutiful child, or a faithful ſervant. If a man profeſſes a great deal of love and friendſhip to another, reaſon teaches all men, that ſuch a profeſſion is not ſo great an evidence of his being a real and hearty friend, as his appearing a friend in deeds; being faithful and conſtant to his friend, in proſperity and adverſity, ready to lay out himſelf, and deny himſelf, and ſuffer in his perſonal intereſt, to do him a kindneſs. A wiſe man will truſt to ſuch evidences of the ſincerity of friendſhip, further than a thouſand earneſt profeſſions and ſolemn declarations, and moſt affectionate expreſſions of friendſhip in words. And there is equal reaſon, why practice ſhould alſo be looked upon as the beſt evidence of friendſhip towards Chriſt. Reaſon ſays the ſame that Chriſt ſaid, in John xiv. 21. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that "loveth me." Thus if we ſee a man, who in the courſe of his life, ſeems to follow and imitate Chriſt, and greatly to exert and deny himſelf for the honor of Chriſt, and to promote his kingdom and intereſt in the world: reaſon teaches, that this is an evidence of love to Chriſt, more to be depended on, than if a man only ſays he has love to Chriſt, and tells of the inward experiences he has had of love to him, what ſtrong love he felt, and how his heart was drawn out in love at ſuch and ſuch a time, when it may be there appears but little imitation of Chriſt in his behaviour, and he ſeems backward to do any great matter for him, or to put himſelf out of his way for the promoting of his kingdom, but ſeems to be apt to excuſe himſelf, whenever he is called to deny himſelf for Chriſt. So if a man in declaring his experiences, tells how he found his heart weaned from the world, and ſaw the vanity of it, ſo that all looked as nothing to him, at ſuch and ſuch times, and profeſſes that he gives up all to God, and calls heaven and earth to witneſs to it; but yet in his practice is violent in purſuing the world, and what he gets he keeps cloſe, is exceeding loth to part with much of it to charitable and pious uſes, it comes from him almoſt like his heart's blood. But there is another profeſſing Chriſtian that ſays not a great deal, yet in his behaviour appears ready at all times to forſake the world, whenever it ſtands in the way of his duty, and is free to part with it at any time, to promote religion and the good of his fellow creatures. Reaſon

teaches,

teaches, that the latter gives far the moſt credible manifeſtation of an heart weaned from the world. And if a man appears to walk humbly before God and men, and to be of a converſation that ſavours of a broken heart, appearing patient and reſigned to God under affliction, and meek in his behaviour amongſt men; this is a better evidence of humiliation, than if a perſon only tells how great a ſenſe he had of his own unworthineſs, how he was brought to lie in the duſt, and was quite emptied of himſelf, and ſee himſelf nothing and all over filthy and abominable, *&c. &c.* but yet acts as if he looked upon himſelf one of the firſt and beſt of ſaints, and by juſt right the head of all the Chriſtians in the town, and is aſſuming, ſelf-willed, and impatient of the leaſt contradiction or oppoſition; we may be aſſured in ſuch a caſe, that a man's practice comes from a lower place in his heart, than his profeſſion. So (to mention no more inſtances) if a profeſſor of Chriſtianity manifeſts in his behaviour a pitiful tender ſpirit towards others in calamity, ready to bear their burdens with them, willing to ſpend his ſubſtance for them, and to ſuffer many inconveniencies in his worldly intereſt to promote the good of others ſouls and bodies; is not this a more credible manifeſtation of a ſpirit of love to men, than only a man's telling what love he felt to others at certain times, how he pitied their ſouls, how his ſoul was in travail for them, and how he felt a hearty love and pity to his enemies; when in his behaviour he ſeems to be of a very ſelfiſh ſpirit, cloſe and niggardly, all for himſelf, and none for his neighbours, and perhaps envious and contentious? Perſons in a pang of affection may think they have a willingneſs of heart for great things, to do much and to ſuffer much, and ſo may profeſs it very earneſtly and confidently, when really their hearts are far from it. Thus many in their affectionate pangs, have thought themſelves willing to be damned eternally for the glory of God. Paſſing affections eaſily produce words; and words are cheap; and godlineſs is more eaſily feigned in words than in actions. Chriſtian practice is a coſtly laborious thing. The ſelf-denial that is required of Chriſtians, and the narrowneſs of the way that leads to life, does not conſiſt in words, but in practice. Hypocrites may much more eaſily be brought to talk like ſaints, than to act like ſaints.

Thus it is plain, that Chriſtian practice is the beſt ſign or manifeſtation of the true godlineſs of a profeſſing Chriſtian, to the eye of his neighbours.

But

But then the following things ſhould be well obſerved, that this matter may be rightly underſtood.

Firſt, It muſt be obſerved, that when the ſcripture ſpeaks of Chriſtian practice, as the beſt evidence to others, of ſincerity and truth of grace, *a profeſſion of Chriſtianity* is not excluded, but ſuppoſed. The rules mentioned, were rules given to the followers of Chriſt, to guide them in their thoughts of *profeſſing Chriſtians*, and thoſe that offered themſelves as ſome of their ſociety, whereby they might judge of the truth of their *pretences*, and the ſincerity of the *profeſſion* they made; and not for the trial of heathens, or thoſe that made no pretence to Chriſtianity, and that Chriſtians had nothing to do with. This is as plain as is poſſible in that great rule which Chriſt gives in the 7th of Matthew, "By their fruits ye ſhall know "them." He there gives a rule how to judge of thoſe that profeſſed to be Chriſtians, yea that made a very high profeſſion, *falſe prophets who come in ſheeps cloathing*, as ver. 15. So it is alſo with that of the apoſtle James, chap. ii. 18. "Shew "me thy faith without thy works, and I will ſhew thee my "faith by my works." It is evident, that both theſe ſorts of perſons, offering to give theſe diverſe evidences of their faith, are profeſſors of faith: this is implied in their offering each of them to give evidences of the faith they profeſſed. And it is evident by the preceding verſes, that the apoſtle is ſpeaking of profeſſors of faith in Jeſus Chriſt. So it is very plain, that the apoſtle John, in thoſe paſſages that have been obſerved in his third epiſtle, is ſpeaking of profeſſing Chriſtians, though in theſe rules, the Chriſtian practice of profeſſors be ſpoken of as the greateſt and moſt diſtinguiſhing ſign of their ſincerity in their profeſſion, much more evidential than their profeſſion itſelf; yet a profeſſion of Chriſtianity is plainly preſuppoſed: it is not the main thing in the evidence, nor any thing diſtinguiſhing in it; yet it is a thing requiſite and neceſſary in it. As the having an animal body, is not any thing diſtinguiſhing of a man, from other creatures, and is not the main thing in the evidence of human nature; yet it is a thing requiſite and neceſſary in the evidence. So that if any man ſhould ſay plainly that he was not a Chriſtian, and did not believe that Jeſus was the Son of God, or a perſon ſent of God; theſe rules of Chriſt and his apoſtle do not at all oblige us to look upon him as a ſincere Chriſtian, let his viſible practice and

virtues

virtues be what they will. And not only do these rules take no place with respect to a man that explicitly denies Christianity, and is a professed Deist, Jew, Heathen, or open infidel; but also with respect to a man that only forbears to make a profession of Christianity: because these rules were given us only to judge of professing Christians: fruits must be joined with open flowers; bells and pomegranates go together.

But here will naturally arise this inquiry, *viz.* When a man may be said to profess Christianity, or what profession may properly be called a profession of Christianity?

I answer in two things.

1. In order to a man's being properly said to make a profession of Christianity, there must undoubtedly be a profession of all that is necessary to his being a Christian, or of so much as belongs to the essence of Christianity. Whatsoever is essential in Christianity itself, the profession of that is essential in the profession of Christianity. The profession must be of the thing professed. For a man to profess Christianity, is for him to declare that he has it. And therefore so much as belongs to a thing, so as to be necessary in order to its being truly denominated *that* thing; so much is essential to the declaration of *that* thing, in order to its being truly denominated a declaration of *that* thing. If we take only a part of Christianity, and leave out a part that is essential to it, what we take is not Christianity; because something that is of the essence of it is wanting. So if we profess only a part, and leave out a part that is essential, that which we profess is not Christianity. Thus in order to a profession of Christianity, we must profess that we believe that Jesus is the Messiah; for this reason, because such a belief is essential to Christianity. And so we must profess, either expressly or implicitly, that Jesus satisfied for our sins, and other essential doctrines of the gospel, because a belief of these things also are essential to Christianity. But there are other things as essential to religion, as an orthodox belief; which it is therefore as necessary that we should profess, in order to our being truly said to profess Christianity. Thus it is essential to Christianity that we repent of our sins, that we be convinced of our own sinfulness, and that we are sensible we have justly exposed ourselves to God's wrath, and that our hearts do renounce all sin, and that we do with our whole hearts embrace Christ as our only Saviour, and that we love him above all, and are willing for his sake to forsake all, and

that

that we do give up ourſelves to be entirely and for ever his, *&c.* Such things as theſe do as much belong to the eſſence of Chriſtianity, as the belief of any of the doctrines of the goſpel: and therefore the profeſſion of them does as much belong to a Chriſtian profeſſion. Not that in order to a being profeſſing Chriſtians, it is neceſſary that there ſhould be an explicit profeſſion of every individual thing that belongs to Chriſtian grace or virtue; but certainly, there muſt be a profeſſion, either expreſs or implicit, of what is of the eſſence of religion. And as to thoſe things that Chriſtians ſhould *expreſs* in their profeſſion, we ought to be guided by the precepts of God's word, or by ſcripture-examples of public profeſſions of religion, God's people have made from time to time. Thus they ought to profeſs their repentance of ſin: as of old, when perſons were initiated as profeſſors, they came confeſſing their ſins, manifeſting their humiliation for ſin, Matth. iii. 6. And the baptiſm they were baptized with, was called *the baptiſm of repentance*, Mark i. 3. And John, when he had baptized them, exhorted them to *bring forth fruits meet for repentance*, Matth. iii. 8. *i. e.* agreeable to that repentance which they had profeſſed; encouraging them, that if they did ſo, they ſhould eſcape the wrath to come, and be gathered as wheat into God's garner, Matth. iii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 12. So the apoſtle Peter ſays to the Jews, Acts ii. 38. "Repent and be baptized:" which ſhews, that repentance is a qualification that muſt be viſible in order to baptiſm; and therefore ought to be publicly profeſſed. So when the Jews that returned from captivity, entered publicly into covenant, it was with confeſſion, or public profeſſion of repentance of their ſins, Neh. ix. 2. This profeſſion of repentance ſhould include or imply a profeſſion of conviction, that God would be juſt in our damnation: ſee Neh. ix. 33. together with verſe 35. and the beginning of the next chapter. They ſhould profeſs their faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and that they embrace Chriſt, and rely upon him as their Saviour, with their whole hearts, and that they do joyfully entertain the goſpel of Chriſt. Thus Philip, in order to baptizing the eunuch, required that he ſhould profeſs that he *believed with all his heart*: and they that were received as viſible Chriſtians, at that great outpouring of the Spirit, which began at the day of Pentecoſt, appeared *gladly to receive the goſpel*; Acts ii. 41. "Then "they that gladly received the word, were baptized: and the "ſame day there were added unto them about three thouſand

" ſouls." They ſhould profeſs that they rely only on Chriſt's righteouſneſs and ſtrength, and that they are devoted to him, as their only Lord and Saviour, and that they rejoice in him as their only righteouſneſs and portion. It is foretold, that all nations ſhould be brought publicly to make this profeſſion, Iſ. xlv. 22. to the end; " Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, all " the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none elſe. " I have ſworn by myſelf, the word is gone out of my mouth " in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, that unto me every " knee ſhall bow, every tongue ſhall ſwear. Surely, ſhall " one ſay, In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength: even " to him ſhall men come, and all that are incenſed againſt him " ſhall be aſhamed. In the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be " juſtified, and ſhall glory." They ſhould profeſs to give up themſelves entirely to Chriſt, and to God through him; as the children of Iſrael, when they publicly recognized their covenant with God; Deut. xxvi. 17. " Thou haſt avouched the " Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and " to keep his ſtatutes, and his commandments, and his judg- " ments, and to hearken unto his voice." They ought to profeſs a willingneſs of heart to embrace religion with all its difficulties, and to walk in a way of obedience to God univerſally and perſeveringly; Exod. xix. 8, and xxiv. 3, 7. Deut. xxvi. 16, 17, 18. 2 Kings xxiii. 3. Neh. x. 28, 29. Pſal. cxix. 57, 106. They ought to profeſs, that all their hearts and ſouls are in theſe engagements to be the Lord's, and forever to ſerve him; 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13, 14. God's people's ſwearing to God, and ſwearing *by* his name, or *to* his name, as it might be rendered, (by which ſeems to be ſignified their ſolemnly giving up themſelves to him in covenant, and vowing to receive him as their God, and to be entirely his, to obey and ſerve him,) is ſpoken of as a duty to be performed by all God's viſible Iſrael; Deut. vi. 13. and x. 20. Pſal. lxiii. 11. Iſ. xix. 18. chap. xlv. 23, 24. compared with Rom. xiv. 11. and Phil. ii. 10, 11. Iſ. xlviii. 1, 2. and lxv. 15, 16. Jer. iv. 2. and v. 7. and xii. 16. Hoſ. iv. 15. and x. 4. Therefore, in order to perſons being intitled to full eſteem and charity, with their neighbours, as being ſincere profeſſors of Chriſtianity; by thoſe forementioned rules of Chriſt and his apoſtles, there muſt be a viſibly holy life, with a profeſſion, either expreſſing, or plainly implying ſuch things as thoſe which have been now mentioned. We are to *know them by their fruits*; that is, we are by their

fruits

fruits to know whether they be what they profeſs to be; not that we are to know by their fruits, that they have ſomething in them, which they do not ſo much as pretend to.

And moreover,

2. That profeſſion of theſe things, which is properly called a Chriſtian profeſſion, and which muſt be joined with Chriſtian practice, in order to perſons being intitled to the benefit of thoſe rules, muſt be made (as to what appears) underſtandingly: that is, they muſt be perſons that appear to have been ſo far inſtructed in the principles of religion, as to be in an ordinary capacity to underſtand the proper import of what is expreſſed in their profeſſion. For ſounds are no ſignifications or declarations of any thing, any further than men underſtand the meaning of their own ſounds.

But in order to perſons making a proper profeſſion of Chriſtianity, ſuch as the ſcripture directs to, and ſuch as the followers of Chriſt ſhould require, in order to the acceptance of the profeſſors with full charity, as of their ſociety; it is not neceſſary they ſhould give an account of the particular ſteps and method, by which the Holy Spirit, ſenſibly to them, wrought and brought about thoſe great eſſential things of Chriſtianity in their hearts. There is no footſtep in the ſcripture of any ſuch way of the apoſtles, or primitive miniſters and Chriſtians, requiring any ſuch relation, in order to their receiving and treating others, as their Chriſtian brethren, to all intents and purpoſes, or of their firſt examining them, concerning the particular method and order of their experiences. They required of them a profeſſion of the things wrought; but no account of the manner of working was required of them. Nor is there the leaſt ſhadow in the ſcripture of any ſuch cuſtom in the church of God, from Adam to the death of the apoſtle John.

I am far from ſaying, that it is not requiſite that perſons ſhould give any ſort of account of their experiences to their brethren. For perſons to profeſs thoſe things wherein the eſſence of Chriſtianity lies, is the ſame thing as to profeſs that they *experience* thoſe things. Thus for perſons ſolemnly to profeſs, that, in a ſenſe and full conviction of their own utter ſinfulneſs, miſery, and impotence, and totally undone ſtate as in themſelves, and their juſt deſert of God's utter rejection and eternal wrath, without mercy, and the utter inſufficiency of their own righteouſneſs, or any thing in them, to ſatisfy divine

juſtice,

juſtice, or recommend them to God's favour, they do only and entirely depend on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and his ſatisfaction and righteouſneſs; that they do with all their hearts believe the truth of the goſpel of Chriſt; and that in a full conviction and ſenſe of his ſufficiency and perfect excellency as a Saviour, as exhibited in the goſpel, they do with their whole ſouls cleave to him, and acquieſce in him, as the refuge and reſt of their ſouls, and fountain of their comfort; that they repent of their ſins, and utterly renounce all ſin, and give up themſelves wholly to Chriſt, willingly ſubjecting themſelves to him as their King; that they give him their hearts and their whole man; and are willing and reſolved to have God for their whole and everlaſting portion; and in a dependence on his promiſes of a future eternal enjoyment of him in heaven, to renounce all the enjoyments of this vain world, ſelling all for this great treaſure and future inheritance, and to comply with every command of God, even the moſt difficult and ſelf-denying, and devote their whole lives to God's ſervice; and that in forgiveneſs of thoſe that have injured them, and a general benevolence to mankind, their hearts are united to the people of Jeſus Chriſt as their people, to cleave to them and love them as their brethren, and worſhip and ſerve God, and follow Chriſt in union and fellowſhip with them, being willing and reſolved to perform all thoſe duties that belong to them, as members of the ſame family of God and myſtical body of Chriſt; I ſay, for perſons ſolemnly to profeſs ſuch things as theſe, as in the preſence of God, is the ſame thing, as to profeſs that they are conſcious to, or do *experience* ſuch things in their hearts.

Nor is it what I ſuppoſe, that perſons giving an account of their experience of particular exerciſes of grace, with the times and circumſtances, gives no advantage to others in forming a judgment of their ſtate; or that perſons may not fitly be inquired of concerning theſe in ſome caſes, eſpecially caſes of great importance, where all poſſible ſatisfaction concerning perſons piety is eſpecially to be deſired and ſought after, as in the caſe of ordination or approbation of a miniſter. It may give advantage in forming a judgment, in ſeveral reſpects; and among others, in this, that hereby we may be better ſatisfied, that the profeſſor ſpeaks honeſtly and underſtandingly, in what he profeſſes; and that he does not make the profeſſion in mere formality. In order to a profeſſion of Chriſtianity being accepted to any purpoſe, there ought to be good reaſon, from

the

the circumſtances of the profeſſion, to think, that the profeſſor does not make ſuch a profeſſion out of a mere cuſtomary compliance with a preſcribed form, uſing words without any diſtinct meaning, or in a very lax and ambiguous manner, as confeſſions of faith are often ſubſcribed; but that the profeſſor underſtandingly and honeſtly ſignifies what he is conſcious of in his own heart; otherwiſe his profeſſion can be of no ſignificance, and no more to be regarded than the ſound of things without life. But indeed (whatever advantage an account of particular exerciſes may give in judging of this) it muſt be owned, that the profeſſor having been previouſly thoroughly inſtructed by his teachers, and giving good proof of his ſufficient knowlege, together with a practice agreeable to his profeſſion, is the beſt evidence of this.

Nor do I ſuppoſe, but that, if a perſon that is inquired of about particular paſſages, times and circumſtances of his Chriſtian experience, among other things, ſeems to be able to give a diſtinct account of the manner of his firſt converſion, in ſuch a method as has been frequently obſervable in true converſion, ſo that things ſeem ſenſibly and diſtinctly to follow one another, in the order of time, according to the order of nature; it is an illuſtrating circumſtance, that among other things, adds luſtre to the evidence he gives his brethren of the truth of his experiences.

But the thing that I ſpeak of as unſcriptural, is the inſiſting on a particular account of the diſtinct method and ſteps, wherein the Spirit of God did ſenſibly proceed, in firſt bringing the ſoul into a ſtate of ſalvation, as a thing requiſite in order to receiving a profeſſor into full charity as a real Chriſtian; or ſo, as for the want of ſuch relation, to diſregard other things in the evidence perſons give to their neighbours of their Chriſtianity, that are vaſtly more important and eſſential.

Secondly, That we may rightly underſtand how Chriſtian practice is the greateſt evidence that others can have of the ſincerity of a profeſſing Chriſtian, it is needful that what was ſaid before, ſhewing what Chriſtian practice is, ſhould be borne in mind; and that it ſhould be conſidered how far this may be viſible to others. Merely that a profeſſor of Chriſtianity is what is commonly called an honeſt man, and a moral man, (*i. e.* we have no ſpecial tranſgreſſion or iniquity to charge him with, that might bring a blot on his character,) is no great

evidence

evidence of the ſincerity of his profeſſion. This is not *making his light ſhine before men.* This is not that *work and labour of love ſhewed towards Chriſt's name*, which gave the apoſtle ſuch perſuaſion of the ſincerity of the profeſſing Hebrews, Heb. vi. 9, 10. It may be ſo, that we may ſee nothing in a man, *but that he may be* a good man, there may appear nothing in his life and converſation inconſiſtent with his being godly, and yet neither may there be any great poſitive evidence *that he is* ſo. But there may be great poſitive appearances of holineſs in mens viſible behaviour: their life may appear to be a life of the ſervice of God: they may appear to follow the example of Jeſus Chriſt, and come up in a great meaſure to thoſe excellent rules in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Matthew, and 12th of Romans, and many other parts of the New Teſtament: there may be a great appearance of their being univerſal in their obedience to Chriſt's commands and the rules of the goſpel. They may appear to be univerſal in the performance of the duties of the firſt table, manifeſting the fear and love of God: and alſo univerſal in fulfilling rules of love to men, love to ſaints, and love to enemies; rules of meekneſs and forgiveneſs, rules of mercy and charity, and looking not only at our own things, but alſo at the things of others; rules of doing good to mens ſouls and bodies, to particular perſons and to the public; rules of temperance and mortification, and of an humble converſation; rules of bridling the tongue, and improving it to glorify God and bleſs men, ſhewing that in their tongues is the law of kindneſs. They may appear to walk as Chriſtians, in all places, and at all ſeaſons, in the houſe of God, and in their families, and among their neighbours, on Sabbath-days, and every day, in buſineſs and in converſation, towards friends and enemies, towards ſuperiors, inferiors, and equals. Perſons in their viſible walk may appear to be very earneſtly engaged in the ſervice of God and mankind, much to labour and lay out themſelves in this work of a Chriſtian, and to be very conſtant and ſtedfaſt in it, under all circumſtances and temptations. There may be great manifeſtations of a ſpirit to deny themſelves, and ſuffer for God and Chriſt, and the intereſt of religion, and the benefit of their brethren. There may be great appearances in a man's walk, of a diſpoſition to forſake any thing, rather than to forſake Chriſt, and to make every thing give place to his honor. There may be great manifeſtations in a man's behaviour of ſuch religion as this being his element, and of his placing

cing the delight and happineſs of his life in it; and his converſation may be ſuch, that he may carry with him a ſweet odour of Chriſtian graces and heavenly diſpoſitions, where-ever he goes. And when it is thus in the profeſſors of Chriſtianity, here is an evidence to others of their ſincerity in their profeſſion, to which all other manifeſtations are not worthy to be compared.

There is doubtleſs a great variety in the degrees of evidence that profeſſors do exhibit of their ſincerity, in their life and practice; as there is a variety in the fairneſs and clearneſs of accounts perſons give of the manner and method of their experiences: but undoubtedly ſuch a manifeſtation as has been deſcribed, of a Chriſtian ſpirit in practice, is vaſtly beyond the faireſt and brighteſt ſtory of particular ſteps and paſſages of experience, that ever was told. And in general, a manifeſtation of the ſincerity of a Chriſtian profeſſion in practice, is far better than a relation of experiences.

But yet,

Thirdly, It muſt be noted, agreeable to what was formerly obſerved, that no external manifeſtations and outward appearances whatſoever, that are viſible to the world, are infallible evidences of grace. Theſe manifeſtations that have been mentioned, are the beſt that mankind can have; and they are ſuch as do oblige Chriſtians entirely to embrace profeſſors as ſaints, and love them and rejoice in them as the children of God, and are ſufficient to give them as great ſatisfaction concerning them, as ever is needful to guide them in their conduct, or for any intent and purpoſe that needs to be anſwered in this world. But nothing that appears to them in their neighbour, can be ſufficient to beget an abſolute certainty concerning the ſtate of his ſoul: for they ſee not his heart, nor can they ſee all his external behaviour; for much of it is in ſecret, and hid from the eye of the world: and it is impoſſible certainly to determine, how far a man may go in many external appearances and imitations of grace, from other principles. Though undoubtedly, if others could ſee ſo much of what belongs to mens practice, as their own conſciences may ſee of it, it might be an infallible evidence of their ſtate, as will appear from what follows.

Having thus conſidered Chriſtian practice as the *beſt evidence* of the ſincerity of profeſſors *to others*, I now proceed,

2. To

2. To obſerve, that the ſcripture alſo ſpeaks of Chriſtian practice as a diſtinguiſhing and ſure evidence of grace to *perſons own conſciences*. This is very plain in 1 John ii. 3. "Hereby "we do know that we know him, if we keep his command-"ments." And the teſtimony of our conſciences, with reſpect to our good deeds, is ſpoken of as that which may give us aſſurance of our own godlineſs; 1 John iii. 18, 19. "My little "children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in "deed, (in the original it is ΕΡΓΩ *in work*,) and in truth. And "hereby we know that we are of the truth, and ſhall aſſure our "hearts before him." And the apoſtle Paul, in Heb. vi. ſpeaks of *the work and labor of love*, of the Chriſtian Hebrews, as that which both gave him a perſuaſion that they had ſomething above the higheſt common illuminations, and alſo as that evidence which tended to give them the higheſt aſſurance of hope concerning themſelves; verſ. 9, *&c.* "But, beloved, we "are perſuaded better things of you, and things that accom-"pany ſalvation, though we thus ſpeak. For God is not un-"righteous, to forget your work and labor of love, which ye "have ſhewed toward his name, in that ye have miniſtered to "his ſaints, and do miniſter. And we deſire that every one "of you do ſhew the ſame diligence, to the full aſſurance of "hope unto the end." So the apoſtle directs the Galatians to examine their behaviour or practice, that they might have rejoicing in themſelves in their own happy ſtate; Gal. vi. 4. "Let every man prove his own work, ſo ſhall "he have rejoicing in himſelf, and not in another." And the Pſalmiſt ſays, cxix. 6. "Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, "when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments;" *i. e.* then ſhall I be bold, and aſſured, and ſtedfaſt in my hope. And in that of our Saviour, Matt. vii. 19, 20. "Every tree that bring-"eth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the fire. "Wherefore by their fruits ye ſhall know them." Though Chriſt gives this firſtly, as a rule by which we ſhould judge of others, yet in the words that next follow he plainly ſhews, that he intends it alſo as a rule by which we ſhould judge ourſelves; *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that* DOTH THE WILL *of my Father which is in heaven. Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, Lord, &c.——And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you: depart from me,* YE THAT WORK INIQUITY. *Therefore, whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and* DOTH *them,*

I will

I will liken him unto a wiſe man which built his houſe upon a rock.——*And every one that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and* DOTH THEM NOT, *ſhall be likened unto a fooliſh man which built his houſe upon the ſand.* I ſhall have occaſion to mention other texts that ſhew the ſame thing, hereafter.

But for the greater clearneſs in this matter, I would *firſt*, ſhew how Chriſtian practice, doing good works, or keeping Chriſt's commandments, is to be taken, when the ſcripture repreſents it as a ſure ſign to our own conſciences, that we are real Chriſtians. And, *ſecondly*, will prove, that this is the chief of all evidences that men can have of their own ſincere godlineſs.

Firſt, I would ſhew how Chriſtian practice, or keeping Chriſt's commandments, is to be taken, when the ſcripture repreſents it as a ſure evidence to our own conſciences, that we are ſincere Chriſtians.

And here I would obſerve, that we cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe, that when the ſcripture in this caſe ſpeaks of good works, good fruit, and keeping Chriſt's commandments, that it has reſpect merely to what is external, or the motion and action of the body, without including any thing elſe, having no reſpect to any aim or intention of the agent, or any act of his underſtanding or will. For conſider men's actions ſo, and they are no more good works or acts of obedience, than the regular motions of a clock; nor are they conſidered as the actions of the men, or any human actions at all. The actions of the body, taken thus, are neither acts of obedience, nor diſobedience; any more than the motions of the body in a convulſion. But the obedience and fruit that is ſpoken of, is the obedience and fruit of the man; and therefore not only the acts of the body, but the obedience of the ſoul, conſiſting in the acts and practice of the ſoul. Not that I ſuppoſe, that when the ſcripture ſpeaks, in this caſe, of gracious works, and fruit, and practice, that in theſe expreſſions is included all inward piety and holineſs of heart, both principle and exerciſe, both ſpirit and practice: becauſe then, in theſe things being given as ſigns of a gracious principle in the heart, the ſame thing would be given as a ſign of itſelf, and there would be no diſtinction between root and fruit. But only the gracious exerciſe, and holy act of the ſoul is meant, and given as the ſign of the holy principle, and good eſtate. Neither is every kind of inward

exercise of grace meant; but the practical exercise, that exercise of the soul, and exertion of inward holiness, which there is in an obediential act; or that exertion of the mind, and act of grace, which issues and terminates in what they call the imperate acts of the will; in which something is directed and commanded by the soul to be done, and brought to pass in practice.

Here, for a clearer understanding, I would observe, that there are two kinds of exercises of grace. 1. There are those that some call *immanent* acts; that is, those exercises of grace that remain within the soul, that begin and are terminated there, without any immediate relation to any thing to be done outwardly, or to be brought to pass in practice. Such are the exercises of grace, which the saints often have in *contemplation:* when the exercise that is in the heart, does not directly proceed *to*, or terminate *in* any thing beyond the thoughts of the mind; however they may tend to practice (as all exercises of grace do) more remotely. 2. There is another kind of acts of grace, that are more strictly called *practical*, or effective exercises; because they immediately respect something to be done. They are the exertions of grace in the commanding acts of the will, directing the outward actions. As when a saint gives a cup of cold water to a disciple, in and from the exercise of the grace of charity; or voluntarily endures persecution, in the way of his duty, immediately from the exercise of a supreme love to Christ. Here is the exertion of grace producing its effect in outward actions. These exercises of grace are practical and productive of good works, not only in this sense, that they are of a *productive nature*, (for so are all exercises of true grace,) but they are the *producing* acts. This is properly the exercise of grace in the act of the will; and this is properly the practice of the soul. And the soul is the immediate actor of no other practice but this: the motions of the body follow from the laws of union between the soul and body, which God, and not the soul has fixed, and does maintain. The act of the soul, and the exercise of grace, that is exerted in the performance of a good work, is the good work itself, so far as the soul is concerned in it, or so far as it is the soul's good work. The determinations of the will, are indeed our very actions, so far as they are properly ours, as Dr. Doddridge observes. * In this practice of the soul, is included the aim and

* Scripture doctrine of salvation, Sermon I. p. 11.

and intention of the ſoul which is the agent. For not only ſhould we not look on the motions of a ſtatue, doing juſtice or diſtributing alms by clock-work, as any acts of obedience to Chriſt in that ſtatue; but neither would any body call the voluntary actions of a man, externally and materially agreeable to a command of Chriſt, by the name of obedience to Chriſt, if he had never heard of Chriſt, or any of his commands, or had no thought of his commands in what he did.——If the acts of obedience and good fruits ſpoken of, be looked upon, not as mere motions of the body, but as acts of the ſoul; the whole exerciſe of the ſpirit of the mind, in the action, muſt be taken in, with the end acted for, and the reſpect the ſoul then has to God, *&c.* otherwiſe they are no acts of denial of ourſelves, or obedience to God, or ſervice done to him, but ſomething elſe. Such effective exerciſes of grace as theſe that I have now deſcribed, many of the martyrs have experienced in a high degree. And all true ſaints live a life of ſuch acts of grace as theſe; as they all live a life of gracious works, of which theſe operative exertions of grace are the life and ſoul. And this is the obedience and fruit that God mainly looks at, as he looks at the ſoul, more than the body; as much as the ſoul, in the conſtitution of the human nature, is the ſuperior part. As God looks at the obedience and practice of the man, he looks at the practice of the ſoul; for the ſoul is the man in God's ſight, *For the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth, for he looketh on the heart.*

And thus it is, that obedience, good works, good fruit, are to be taken, when given in ſcripture as a ſure evidence to our own conſciences of a true principle of grace; even as including the obedience and practice of the ſoul, as preceding and governing the actions of the body. When practice is given in ſcripture as the main evidence of our true Chriſtianity to others, then is meant that in our practice which is viſible to them, even our outward actions: but when practice is given as a ſure evidence of our real Chriſtianity to our own conſciences, then is meant that in our practice which is viſible to our own conſciences; which is not only the motion of our bodies, but the exertion and exerciſe of the ſoul, which directs and commands that motion; which is more directly and immediately under the view of our own conſciences, than the act of the body. And that this is the intent of the ſcripture, not only does the nature and reaſon of the thing ſhew, but it is plain by the

ſcripture

ſcripture itſelf. Thus it is evident, that when Chriſt, at the concluſion of his ſermon on the mount, ſpeaks of *doing* or practiſing thoſe ſayings of his, as the grand ſign of profeſſors being true diſciples, without which he likens them to a man that built his houſe upon the ſand, and with which, to a man that built his houſe upon a rock; he has a reſpect, not only to the outward behaviour, but to the inward exerciſe of the mind in that behaviour: as is evident by obſerving what thoſe preceding ſayings of his are, that he refers to, when he ſpeaks of our doing or practiſing them; and we ſhall find they are ſuch as theſe; *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit; bleſſed are they that mourn; bleſſed are the meek; bleſſed are they that do hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs; bleſſed are the merciful; bleſſed are the pure in heart; whoſoever is angry with his brother without a cauſe*, &c. *whoſoever looketh on a woman to luſt after her*, &c. *love your enemies; take no thought for your life*, and others of the like nature, which imply inward exerciſes: and when Chriſt ſays, John xiv. 21. "He that hath my commandments, and "keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;" he has evidently a ſpecial reſpect to that command ſeveral times repeated in the ſame diſcourſe, (which he calls, by way of eminence, *his commandment,) that they ſhould love one another, as he had loved them:* (See chap. xiii. 34, 35. and chap. xv. 10, 12, 13, 14.) But this command reſpects chiefly an exerciſe of the mind or heart, though exerted in practice. So when the apoſtle John ſays, 1 John ii. 3. "Hereby we do know that we know him, "if we keep his commandments;" he has plainly a principal reſpect to the ſame command, as appears by what follows, verſe 7—11. and 2d Epiſt. verſe 5, 6. and when we are told in ſcripture that men ſhall at the laſt day be judged *according to their works*, and *all ſhall receive according to the things done in the body*; it is not to be underſtood only of outward acts; for if ſo, why is God ſo often ſpoken of as ſearching the hearts and trying the reins, *that he may render to every one according to his works?* as Rev. ii. 23. "And all the churches ſhall know that "I am he which ſearcheth the reins and hearts: and I will "give unto every one according to his works." Jer. xvii. 9, 10. "I the Lord ſearch the heart, I try the reins, even to give "every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit "of his doings." But if by *his ways, and the fruit of his doings*, is meant only the actions of his body, what need of *ſearching the heart and reins*, in order to know them? Hezekiah in his

ſickneſs

ſickneſs pleads his practice as an evidence of his title to God's favour, as including, not only his outward actions, but what was in his heart, Iſ. xxxviii. 3. "Remember now, O "Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, "and with a perfect heart."

Though in this great evidence of ſincerity that the ſcripture gives us, what is inward is of greateſt importance; yet what is outward is included and intended, as connected with the practicle exertion of grace in the will, directing and commanding the actions of the body. And hereby are effectually cut off all pretentions that any man can have to evidences of godlineſs, who externally lives wickedly; becauſe the great evidence lies in that inward exerciſe and practice of the ſoul, which conſiſts in the act of the will, commanding outward acts. But it is known, that theſe commanding acts of the will are not one way, and the actions of the bodily organs another: for the unalterable law of nature is, that they ſhould be united, as long as ſoul and body are united, and the organs are not ſo deſtroyed as to be incapable of thoſe motions that the ſoul commands. Thus it would be ridiculous for a man to plead, that the commanding act of his will was to go to the public worſhip, while his feet carry him to a tavern or brothel-houſe; or that the commanding act of his will was to give ſuch a piece of money he had in his hand to a poor beggar, while his hand at the ſame inſtant kept it back, and held it faſt.

Secondly, I proceed to ſhew, that Chriſtian practice, taken in the ſenſe that has been explained, is *the chief* of all the evidences of a ſaving ſincerity in religion, to the conſciences of the profeſſors of it, much to be preferred to the method of the firſt convictions, enlightenings, and comforts in converſion, or any immanent diſcoveries or exerciſes of grace whatſoever, that begin and end in contemplation. * The evidence of this appears by the following arguments.

Argument

* "Look upon John, Chriſt's beloved diſciple and boſom companion; he had received the anointing to know him that is true, "and he knew that he knew him," 1 John ii. 3. But how did he know that? He might be deceived; (as it is ſtrange to ſee what a melancholy fancy will do, and the effects of it; as honeſt men are reputed to have weak brains, and never ſaw the depths of the ſecrets of God;) what is his *laſt* proof? *Becauſe we keep his commandments.*" *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 131.

Argument I. Reaſon plainly ſhews, that thoſe things which put it to the proof what men will actually cleave to and prefer in their practice, when left to follow their own choice and inclinations, are the proper trial what they do really prefer in their hearts. Sincerity in religion, as has been obſerved already, conſiſts in ſetting God higheſt in the heart, in chuſing him before other things, in having a heart to ſell all for Chriſt, *&c.*—But a man's actions are the proper trial what a man's heart prefers. As for inſtance, when it is ſo that God and other things come to ſtand in competition, God is as it were ſet before a man on one hand, and his worldly intereſt or pleaſure on the other, (as it often is ſo in the courſe of a man's life), his behaviour in ſuch caſe, in actually cleaving to the one and forſaking the other, is the proper trial which he prefers. Sincerity conſiſts in forſaking all for Chriſt in heart; but to forſake all for Chriſt in heart, is the very ſame thing as to have an heart to forſake all for Chriſt; but certainly the proper trial whether a man has an heart to forſake all for Chriſt, is his being actually put to it, the having Chriſt and other things coming in competition, that he muſt actually or practically cleave to

" A man may know his preſent union to the Lord Jeſus, by a work; 1 John ii. 4. " He that ſaith I know him, and keeps not his commandments, is a liar."—Yes, that is true negatively; but may a man, ought a man, to ſee or know his union poſitively by this? Anſ. verſ. 5. Many ſaid they did know and love the Lord, but *he that keeps his words.*—O they are ſweet! It is heaven to cleave to him in every command; it is death to depart from any command: *hereby know we that we are in him.* If it were poſſible to aſk of angels, how they know they are not devils, they would anſwer, the Lord's will is ours." *Shepard's Parable,* Part I. p. 134.

" If the queſtion be, Whom doth the Lord Jeſus love? you need not go to heaven for it, the word is nigh thee, *Thoſe that love Chriſt.* Who are thoſe? *Thoſe that keep his commandments.*" *Shepard's Parable,* Part I. p. 138.

" Will you have Chriſt ſit in heaven, and not look that he ſubdue your luſts by the work of his grace, and ſo ſway your hearts? You deſpiſe his kingdom then. Do you ſeek for pardon in the blood of Chriſt, and never look for the virtue and end of that blood to waſh you and make you without ſpot, *&c.*? You deſpiſe his prieſthood and blood then. Do you look for Chriſt to do work for you, and you not do Chriſt's work, and bring forth fruit to him? You deſpiſe his honor then, John xv. 8. If I were to diſcover a hypocrite, or a falſe heart, this I would ſay, It is he that ſhall ſet up Chriſt, but loath his work." *Shepard's Parable,* Part I. p. 140.

to one and forſake the other. To forſake all for Chriſt in heart, is the ſame thing as to have a heart to forſake all for Chriſt when called to it: but the higheſt proof to ourſelves and others, that we have an heart to forſake all for Chriſt when called to it, is actually doing it when called to it, or ſo far as called to it. To follow Chriſt in heart, is to have an heart to follow him. To deny ourſelves in heart for Chriſt, is the ſame thing as to have an heart to deny ourſelves for him in fact. The main and moſt proper proof of a man's having an heart to any thing, concerning which he is at liberty to follow his own inclinations, and either to do or not to do as he pleaſes, is his doing of it. When a man is at liberty whether to ſpeak or keep ſilence, the moſt proper evidence of his having an heart to ſpeak, is his ſpeaking. When a man is at liberty whether to walk or ſit ſtill, the proper proof of his having an heart to walk, is his walking. Godlineſs conſiſts not in an heart to intend to do the will of God, but in an heart to do it. The children of Iſrael in the wilderneſs had the former, of whom we read, Deut. v. 27, 28, 29. "Go thou near, and "hear all that the Lord our God ſhall ſay; and ſpeak thou "unto us all that the Lord our God ſhall ſpeak unto thee, and "we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice "of your words, when ye ſpake unto me; and the Lord ſaid "unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, "which they have ſpoken unto thee: they have well ſaid all "that they have ſpoken. O that there were ſuch an HEART "in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my command-"ments always, that it might be well with them, and with "their children for ever!" The people manifeſted that they had *a heart to intend to keep God's commandments*, and to be very forward in thoſe intentions; but God manifeſts, that this was far from being the thing that he deſired, wherein true godlineſs conſiſts, even *an heart actually to keep them.*

It is therefore exceeding abſurd, and even ridiculous, for any to pretend that they have a good heart, while they live a wicked life, or do not bring forth the fruit of univerſal holineſs in their practice. For it is proved in fact, that ſuch men do not love God above all. It is fooliſh to diſpute againſt plain fact and experience. Men that live in ways of ſin, and yet flatter themſelves that they ſhall go to heaven, or expect to be received hereafter as holy perſons, without a holy life and practice, act as though they expected to make a tool of their

Judge.

Judge. Which is implied in what the apoſtle ſays, (ſpeaking of mens doing good works, and living an holy life, thereby exhibiting evidence of their title to everlaſting life), Gal. vi. 7. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatſoever a man "ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap." As much as to ſay, "Do "not deceive yourſelves with an expectation of reaping life "everlaſting hereafter, if you do not ſow to the Spirit here; "it is in vain to think that God will be made a fool of by you, "that he will be ſhammed and baffled with ſhadows inſtead of "ſubſtance, and with vain pretences, inſtead of that good fruit "which he expects, when the contrary to what you pretend, "appears plainly in your life, before his face." In this manner the word *mock* is ſometimes uſed in ſcripture. Thus Delilah ſays to Sampſon, *Behold, thou haſt mocked me, and told me lies*, Judges xvi. 10, 13. *i. e.* "Thou haſt baffled me, as "though you would make a fool of me, as if I might be eaſily "turned off with any vain pretence, inſtead of the truth." So it is ſaid that Lot, when he told his ſons-in-law that God would deſtroy that place, *he ſeemed as one that mocked to his ſons-in-law*, Gen. xix. 14, *i. e.* he ſeemed as one that would make a game of them, as though they were ſuch credulous fools as to regard ſuch bugbears. But the great Judge, whoſe eyes are as a flame of fire, will not be mocked or baffled with any pretences, without a holy life. If in his name men have propheſied and wrought miracles, and have had faith, ſo that they could remove mountains, and caſt out devils, and however high their religious affections have been, however great reſemblances they have had of grace, and though their hiding place has been ſo dark and deep, that no human ſkill nor ſearch could find them out; yet if they are *workers* or *practiſers of iniquity*, they cannot hide their hypocriſy from their Judge; Job xxxiv. 22. "There is no darkneſs, nor ſhadow of death, where the "WORKERS OF INIQUITY may hide themſelves." Would a wiſe prince ſuffer himſelf to be fooled and baffled by a ſubject, who ſhould pretend that he was a loyal ſubject, and ſhould tell his prince that he had an entire affection to him, and that at ſuch and ſuch a time he had experience of it, and felt his affections ſtrongly working towards him, and ſhould come expecting to be accepted and rewarded by his prince, as one of his beſt friends on that account, though he lived in rebellion againſt him, following ſome pretender to his crown, and from time to time ſtirring up ſedition againſt him? or would a maſter ſuffer himſelf

himſelf to be ſhammed and gulled by a ſervant, that ſhould pretend to great experiences of love and honour towards him in his heart, and a great ſenſe of his worthineſs and kindneſs to him, when at the ſame time he refuſed to obey him, and he could get no ſervice done by him?

Argument II. As reaſon ſhews, that thoſe things which occur in the courſe of life, that put it to the proof whether men will prefer God to other things in practice, are the proper trial of the uprightneſs and ſincerity of their hearts; ſo the ſame are repreſented as the proper trial of the ſincerity of profeſſors, in the ſcripture. There we find that ſuch things are called by that very name, *trials or temptations*, (which I before obſerved are both words of the ſame ſignification.) The things that put it to the proof, whether men will prefer God to other things in practice, are the difficulties of religion, or thoſe things which occur that make the practice of duty difficult and croſs to other principles beſides the love of God; becauſe in them, God and other things are both ſet before men together, for their actual and practical choice; and it comes to this, that we cannot hold to both, but one or the other muſt be forſaken. And theſe things are all over the ſcripture called by the name of *trials or proofs*. * And they are called by this name, becauſe hereby profeſſors are tried and proved of what ſort they be, whether they be really what they profeſs and appear to be; and becauſe in them, the reality of a ſupreme love to God is brought to the teſt of experiment and fact; they are the proper proofs, in which it is truly determined by experience, whether men have a thorough diſpoſition of heart to cleave to God or no; Deut. viii. 2. "And thou ſhalt remember all the way which "the Lord thy God led thee theſe forty years in the wilderneſs, "to humble thee, and to prove thee, whether thou wouldſt "keep his commandments, or no," Judg. ii. 21, 22. "I alſo "will not henceforth drive out any from before them, of the "nations which Joſhua left when he died: that through them I "may prove Iſrael, whether they will keep the way of the "Lord." So chap. iii. 1, 4. and Exod. xvi. 4. And the ſcripture, when it calls theſe difficulties of religion by the name

* 2 Cor. viii. 2. Heb. xi. 36. 1 Pet. i. 7. Chap. iv. 12. Gen. xxii. 1. Deut. viii. 2, 16. Chap. xiii. 3. Exod. xv. 25. Chap. xvi. 4. Judges ii. 22. Chap. iii. 1, 4. Pſal. lxvi. 10, 11. Dan. xii. 10. Rev. iii. 10. Job xxiii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. Jam. i. 12. Rev. ii. 10. Luke viii. 13. Acts xx. 19. Jam. i. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 6.

of temptations or trials, explains itſelf to mean thereby, the trial or experiment of their faith, Jam. i. 2, 3. "My brethren, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; know- "ing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. "Now for a ſeaſon ye are in heavineſs, "through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith "being much more precious than of gold," &c. So the apoſtle Paul ſpeaks of that expenſive duty of parting with our ſubſtance to the poor, as the proof of the ſincerity of the love of Chriſtians, 2 Cor. viii. 8. And the difficulties of religion are often repreſented in ſcripture as being the trial of profeſſors, in the ſame manner that the furnace is the proper trial of gold and ſilver; Pſal. lxvi. 10, 11. "Thou, O God, haſt "proved us: thou haſt tried us, as ſilver is tried: thou brought- "eſt us into the net, thou laidſt affliction upon our loins." Zech. xiii. 9. "And I will bring the third part of them "through the fire; and I will refine them as ſilver is refined; "and I will try them as gold is tried." That which has the colour and appearance of gold, is put into the furnace to try whether it be what it ſeems to be, real gold or no. So the difficulties of religion are called trials, becauſe they try thoſe that have the profeſſion and appearance of ſaints, whether they are what they appear to be, real ſaints. If we put true gold into the furnace, we ſhall find its great value and precioufneſs; ſo the truth and ineſtimable value of the virtues of a true Chriſtian appear, when under theſe trials; 1 Pet. i. 7. "That the "trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold "that periſheth, might be found unto praiſe, and honour, and "glory." True and pure gold will come out of the furnace in full weight: ſo true ſaints when tried come forth as gold, Job xxiii. 10. Chriſt diſtinguiſhes true grace from counterfeit by this, that it is *gold tried in the fire*, Rev. iii. 17, 18. So that it is evident that theſe things are called *trials* in ſcripture, principally as they try or prove the ſincerity of profeſſors. And from what has been now obſerved, it is evident that they are the moſt proper trial or proof of their ſincerity; inaſmuch as the very meaning of the word *trial*, as it is ordinarily uſed in ſcripture, is the difficulty occurring in the way of a profeſſor's duty, as the trial or experiment of his ſincerity. If *trial of ſincerity* be the proper name of theſe difficulties of religion, then doubtleſs theſe difficulties of religion are *properly and eminently* the trial of ſincerity; for they are doubtleſs eminently

what

what they are called by the Holy Ghoſt: God gives things their name from that which is eminently their nature. And if it be ſo, that theſe things are the proper and eminent trial, proof or experiment of the ſincerity of profeſſors; then certainly the reſult of the trial or experiment, (that is, perſons behaviour or practice under ſuch trials,) is the proper and eminent evidence of their ſincerity. For they are called trials or proofs, only with regard to the reſult, and becauſe the effect is eminently the *proof*, or *evidence*. And this is the moſt proper proof and evidence to the conſcience of thoſe that are the ſubjects of theſe trials. For when God is ſaid by theſe things *to try men, and prove them, to ſee what is in their hearts, and whether they will keep his commandments or no*; we are not to underſtand, that it is for his own information, or that he may obtain evidence himſelf of their ſincerity; (for he needs no trials for his information:) but chiefly for their conviction, and to exhibit evidence to their conſciences.† Thus when God is ſaid to prove Iſrael by the difficulties they met with in the wilderneſs, and by the difficulties they met with from their enemies in Canaan, to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep his commandments, or no; it muſt be underſtood, that it was to diſcover them to themſelves, that they might know what was in their own hearts. So when God tempted or tried Abraham with that difficult command of offering up his ſon, it was not for his ſatisfaction, whether he feared God or no, but for Abraham's own greater ſatisfaction and comfort, and the more clear manifeſtation and comfort, and the more clear manifeſtation of the favour of God to him. When Abraham had proved faithful under this trial, God ſays to him, *Now I know that thou feareſt God, ſeeing thou haſt not with-held thy ſon, thine only ſon from me.* Which plainly implies, that in this practical exerciſe of Abraham's grace under this trial, was a clearer evidence of the truth of his grace, than ever was before; and the greateſt evidence to Abraham's conſcience; becauſe God himſelf gives it to Abraham as ſuch, for his comfort and rejoicing: and ſpeaks of it to him, as what might be the greateſt evidence to his conſcience

† "I am purſuaded, as Calvin is, that all the ſeveral trials of men, are to ſhew them to themſelves, and to the world, that they be but counterfeits; and to make ſaints known to themſelves, the better.—Rom. v. 5. *Tribulation works trial, and that hope.* Prov. xvii. 3. If you will know whether it will hold weight, the trial will tell you." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 191.

ſcience of his being upright in the ſight of his Judge. Which proves what I ſay, that holy practice under trials is the higheſt evidence of the ſincerity of profeſſors to their own conſciences. And we find that Chriſt from time to time took the ſame method to convince the conſciences of thoſe that pretended friendſhip to him, and to ſhew them what they were. This was the method he took with the rich young man, Matth. xix. 16, &c. He ſeemed to ſhew a great reſpect to Chriſt; he came kneeling to him, and called him *good maſter*, and made a great profeſſion of obedience to the commandments; but Chriſt tried him by bidding him *go and ſell all that he had, and give to the poor, and come and take up his croſs, and follow him*; telling him, *that then he ſhould have treaſure in heaven.* So he tried another that we read of Matth. viii. 20. He made a great profeſſion of reſpect to Chriſt: ſays he, *Lord, I will follow thee whetherſoever thou goeſt.* Chriſt immediately put his friendſhip to the proof, by telling him that *the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had neſts, but that the Son of man had not where to lay his head.* And thus Chriſt is wont ſtill to try profeſſed diſciples in general, in his providence. So the ſeed ſown in every kind of ground, ſtony ground, thorny ground, and good ground, which in all appears alike, when it firſt ſprings up; yet is tried, and the difference made to appear, by the burning heat of the ſun.

Seeing therefore that theſe are the things that God makes uſe of to try us, it is undoubtedly the ſureſt way for us to paſs a right judgment on ourſelves, to try ourſelves, by the ſame things. Theſe trials of his are not for his information, but for ours; therefore we ought to receive our information from thence. The ſureſt way to know our gold, is to look upon it and examine it in God's furnace, where he tries it for that end, that we may ſee what it is. If we have a mind to know whether a building ſtands ſtrong or no, we muſt look upon it when the wind blows. If we would know whether that which appears in the form of wheat, has the real ſubſtance of wheat, or be only chaff, we muſt obſerve it when it is winnowed. If we would know whether a ſtaff be ſtrong, or a rotten broken reed, we muſt obſerve it when it is leaned on, and weight is borne upon it. If we would weigh ourſelves juſtly, we muſt weigh ourſelves in God's ſcales, that he makes uſe of to weigh us. * Theſe trials

* Dr. Sibbs, in his *Bruiſed Reed*, ſays, "When Chriſt's will cometh in competition with any worldly loſs or gain, yet if then, in that particular

trials in the courſe of our practice, are as it were the balances in which our hearts are weighed, or in which Chriſt and the world, or Chriſt and his competitors, as to the eſteem and regard they have in our hearts, are weighed, or are put into oppoſite ſcales, by which there is opportunity to ſee which preponderates. When a man is brought to the dividing of paths, the one of which leads to Chriſt, and the other to the objects of his luſts, to ſee which way he will go, or is brought, and as it were ſet between Chriſt and the world, Chriſt on the right hand, and the world on the left, ſo that if he goes to one he muſt leave the other, to ſee which his heart inclines moſt to, or which preponderates in his heart; this is juſt the ſame thing as laying Chriſt and the world in two oppoſite ſcales: and his going to the one, and leaving the other, is juſt the ſame thing, as

particular caſe, the heart will ſtoop to Chriſt, it is a true ſign. For the trueſt trial of the power of grace, is in ſuch particular caſes as touch us neareſt; for there our corruption maketh the greateſt head. When Chriſt came home to the young man in the goſpel, he loſt a diſciple of him."

Mr. Flavel ſpeaks of a holy practice under trials, as the greateſt evidence of grace. "No man (ſays he) can ſay what he is, whether his graces be true or falſe, until they be tried and examined by thoſe things, which are to them as fire is to gold." *Touchſtone of Sincerity*, Chap. 4. ſect. 1. Again, ſpeaking of great difficulties and ſufferings in the way of duty, wherein a perſon muſt actually part with what is deareſt of a worldly nature, or with his duty; he ſays, "That ſuch ſufferings as theſe will diſcover the falſeneſs and rottenneſs of mens hearts, cannot be doubted; if you conſider, that this is the fire deſigned by God for this very uſe and purpoſe, to ſeparate the gold from the droſs. So you will find it, 1 Pet. iv. 12. "Beloved, think "it not ſtrange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you," *i. e.* The very deſign and aim of providence in permitting and ordering them, is to try you. Upon this account you find the hour of perſecution (in a ſuitable notion) called the hour of temptation or probation, Rev. iii. 10. For then profeſſors are ſifted to the very bran, ſearched to the very bottom principles. This is "the day that burns "as an oven; all that do wickedly ſhall be as ſtubble," Mal. iv. 1. For in that day the predominant intereſt muſt appear and be diſcovered, it can be concealed no longer. "No man can ſerve two maſters," ſaith Chriſt, Luke xvi. 13. A man may ſerve many maſters, if they all command the ſame thing, or things ſubordinate to each other: but he cannot ſerve two maſters, if their commands claſh and interfere with each other; and ſuch are the commands of Chriſt and the

fleſh

as the ſinking of one ſcale, and riſing of the other. A man's practice therefore, under the trials of God's providence, are as much the proper experiment and evidence of the ſuperior inclination of his heart, as the motion of the balance, with different weights, in oppoſite ſcales, is the proper experiment of the ſuperior weight.

Argument III. Another argument, that holy practice, in the ſenſe which has been explained, is the higheſt kind of evidence of the truth of grace to the conſciences of Chriſtians, is, that in practice, grace, in ſcripture ſtyle, is ſaid to be *made perfect*, or to be *finiſhed*. So the apoſtle James ſays, Jam. ii. 22. "Seeſt "thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was "faith made perfect," or "finiſhed?" (as the word in the original properly ſignifies.) So the love of God is ſaid to be made perfect, or finiſhed, in keeping his commandments; 1 John ii. 4,

fleſh in a ſuffering hour:—thus the two intereſts come in full oppoſition. And now have but patience and wait a little, and you will diſcern which is predominant. A dog follows two men, while they both walk one way, and you know not which of the two is his maſter: ſtay but a little, until their path parts, and then you ſhall quickly ſee who is his maſter: ſo it is in this caſe." *Ibid.* Chap. viii. § 3. And in another chapter he ſays, "Great numbers of perſons are deceived and deſtroyed by truſting to ſeeming untried grace. This was the miſerable condition of the Laodicean profeſſors: they reckoned themſelves rich, but were really poor. all is not gold that gliſters: their gold (as they accounted it) was never tried in the fire. If a man's whole eſtate lay in ſome precious ſtone, ſuppoſe a rich diamond, how is he concerned to have it thoroughly tried, to ſee whether it will bear a ſmart ſtroke with the hammer, or fly like a Briſtol diamond!" *Ibid.* Chap. x. § 3. Again in the ſame place, "The promiſes of ſalvation are made over to tried grace, and that only as will endure the trial."

"The Lord will try you. God hath his trying times: and they were never ſent, but to diſcover who were droſs, who were gold. And the main end of all God's trials, is to diſcover this truth that I now am preſſing upon you. Some have a thorough work; and now the trial diſcovers the truth, as in Abraham, Heb. xi. 17. Some have a ſuperficial work, and they fall in trial, as in Saul; and it doth diſcover it was but an overly work. For this is the queſtion God makes, Is it thorough or no? Ay, ſaith the carnal heart; Yes, ſaith a gracious heart. Hence it is ſtrange to ſee what men will do when a trial comes." *Shepard's Parable*, Part I. p. 219.

"There is an hour of temptation which tries men, which will diſcover men indeed." *Shepard's Parable*, Part II. p. 60.

ii. 4, 5. "He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his "commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him: but "whoſo keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God "perfected." The commandment of Chriſt which the apoſtle has eſpecial reſpect to, when he here ſpeaks of our keeping his commandments, is (as I obſerved before) that great commandment of his, which reſpects deeds of love to our brethren; as appears by the following verſes. Again, the love of God is ſaid to be perfected, in the ſame ſenſe, chap. iv. 12. "If we "love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is per-"fected in us." Here doubtleſs the apoſtle has ſtill reſpect to loving one another, in the ſame manner that he had explained in the preceding chapter, ſpeaking of loving one another, as a ſign of the love of God, verſ. 17, 18. "Whoſo hath this world's "goods, and ſhutteth up his bowels, *&c.* how dwelleth the love "of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, "neither in tongue, but in deed, (or in work,) and in truth." By thus *loving in work*, the apoſtle ſays *the love of God is perfected in us.*" Grace is ſaid to be perfected or finiſhed in holy practice, as therein it is brought to its proper effect, and to that exerciſe which is the end of the principle; the tendency and deſign of grace herein is reached, and its operation completed and crowned. As the tree is made perfect in the fruit: it is not perfected in the ſeed's being planted in the ground; it is not perfected in the firſt quickening of the ſeed, and in its putting forth root and ſprout; nor is it perfected when it comes up out of the ground; nor is it perfected in bringing forth leaves; nor yet in putting forth bloſſoms: but when it has brought forth good ripe fruit, then it is perfected, therein it reaches its end, the deſign of the tree is finiſhed: all that belongs to the tree is completed and brought to its proper effect in the fruit. So is grace in its practical exerciſes. Grace is ſaid to be made perfect or finiſhed in its work or fruit, in the ſame manner as it is ſaid of ſin, Jam. i. 15. "When luſt hath "conceived, it bringeth forth ſin; and ſin when it is finiſhed, "bringeth forth death." Here are three ſteps; *firſt*, ſin in its principle or habit, in the being of luſt in the heart; and *nextly*, here is its conceiving, conſiſting in the immanent exerciſes of it in the mind; and *laſtly*, here is the fruit that was conceived actually brought forth, in the wicked work and practice. And this the apoſtle calls the *finiſhing* or *perfecting* of ſin: for the word in the original is the ſame that is tranſlated *perfected* in thoſe forementioned places.

Now

Now certainly if it be ſo, if grace be in this manner made perfect, in its fruit, if theſe practical exerciſes of grace are thoſe exerciſes wherein grace is brought to its proper effect and end, and the exerciſes wherein whatſoever belongs to its deſign, tendency and operation, is completed and crowned; then theſe exerciſes muſt be the higheſt evidences of grace, above all other exerciſes. Certainly the proper nature and tendency of every principle, muſt appear beſt and moſt fully, in its moſt perfect exerciſes, or in thoſe exerciſes wherein its nature is moſt completely exerted, and its tendency moſt fully anſwered and crowned, in its proper effect and end. If we would ſee the proper nature of any thing whatſoever, and ſee it in its full diſtinction from other things; let us look upon it in the finiſhing of it. The apoſtle James ſays, *by works is faith made perfect*; and introduces this as an argument to prove that works are the chief evidence of faith, whereby the ſincerity of the profeſſors of faith is juſtified, James ii. And the apoſtle John, after he had once and again told us, that love was made perfect in keeping Chriſt's commandments, obſerves, 1 John iv. 18. "That "perfect love caſteth out fear;" meaning (atleaſt in part) love made perfect in this ſenſe; agreeable to what he had ſaid in the foregoing chapter, "That by loving in deed, or work, we "know that we are of the truth, and ſhall aſſure our hearts," verſ. 18, 19.

Argument IV. Another thing which makes it evident that holy practice is the principal evidence that we ought to make uſe of in judging both of our own and others ſincerity, is, that this evidence is above all others inſiſted on in ſcripture. A common acquaintance with the ſcripture, together with a little attention and obſervation, will be ſufficient to ſhew to any one, that this is ten times more inſiſted on as a note of true piety, throughout the ſcripture, from the beginning of Geneſis to the end of Revelations, than any thing elſe. And in the New Teſtament, where Chriſt and his apoſtles do expreſsly, and of declared purpoſe, lay down ſigns of true godlineſs, this is almoſt wholly inſiſted on. It may be obſerved, that Chriſt and his apoſtles do not only often ſay thoſe things, in their diſcourſing on the great doctrines of religion, which do ſhew what the nature of true godlineſs muſt be, or from whence the nature and ſigns of it may be inferred by juſt conſequence, and often occaſionally mention many things which do appertain to godlineſs; but they do alſo often, of ſet purpoſe, give ſigns and

marks

marks for the trial of profeſſors, putting them upon trying themſelves by the ſigns they give, introducing what they ſay with ſuch like expreſſions as theſe; *By this you ſhall know that you know God: By this are manifeſt the children of God, and the children of the devil: He that hath this, builds on a good foundation; he that hath it not, builds on the ſand: Hereby we ſhall aſſure our hearts: He is the man that loveth Chriſt*, &c. But I can find no place, where either Chriſt or his apoſtles do in this manner give ſigns of godlineſs, (though the places are many,) but where Chriſtian practice is almoſt the only thing inſiſted on. Indeed in many of theſe places, *love to the brethren* is ſpoken of as a ſign of godlineſs; and (as I have obſerved before) there is no one virtuous affection or diſpoſition ſo often expreſsly ſpoken of as a ſign of true grace, as our having love one to another: but then the ſcriptures explain themſelves to intend chiefly this love as exerciſed and expreſſed in practice, or in deeds of love. So does the apoſtle John (who above all others inſiſts on love to the brethren as a ſign of godlineſs) moſt expreſsly explain himſelf, in that 1 John iii. 14, &c. "We "know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we "love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother, abideth "in death—Whoſo hath this world's good, and ſeeth his bro-"ther have need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion "from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little "children, let us love, not in word, neither in tongue, but in "deed, (*i. e.* in deeds of love,) and in truth. And hereby we "know that we are of the truth, and ſhall aſſure our hearts "before him." So that when the ſcripture ſo much inſiſts on our loving one another, as a great ſign of godlineſs, we are not thereby to underſtand the immanent workings of affection which men feel one to another, ſo much as the ſoul's practiſing all the duties of the ſecond table of the law; all which the New Teſtament tells us again and again, a true love one to another comprehends; Rom. xiii. 8. and 10. Gal. v. 14. Matth. xxii. 39, 40. So that really, there is no place in the New Teſtament, where the declared deſign is to give ſigns of godlineſs, but that holy practice, and keeping Chriſt's commandments, is the mark choſen out from all others to be inſiſted on. Which is an invincible argument, that it is the chief of all the evidences of godlineſs: unleſs we ſuppoſe, that when Chriſt and his apoſtles on deſign ſet themſelves about this buſineſs of giving ſigns, by which profeſſing Chriſtians

in all ages might determine their ſtate, they did not know how to chooſe ſigns ſo well as we could have choſen for them. But if we make the word of Chriſt our rule, then undoubtedly thoſe marks which Chriſt and his apoſtles did chiefly lay down, and give to us, that we might try ourſelves by them, thoſe ſame marks we ought eſpecially to receive, and chiefly to make uſe of, in the trial of ourſelves. * And ſurely thoſe things which Chriſt and his apoſtles chiefly inſiſted on in the rules they gave, miniſters ought chiefly to inſiſt on in the rules they give. To inſiſt much on thoſe things that the ſcripture inſiſts little on, and to inſiſt very little on thoſe things on which the ſcripture inſiſts much, is a dangerous thing; becauſe it is going out of God's way, and is to judge ourſelves, and guide others, in an unſcriptural manner. God knew which way of leading and guiding ſouls was ſafeſt and beſt for them: he inſiſted ſo much on ſome things, becauſe he knew it to be needful that they ſhould be inſiſted on; and let other things more alone, as a wiſe God, becauſe he knew it was not beſt for us, ſo much to lay the weight of the trial there. As the Sabbath was made for man, ſo the ſcriptures were made for man; and they are by infinite wiſdom fitted for our uſe and benefit. We ſhould therefore make them our guide in all things, in our thoughts of religion and of ourſelves. And for us to make that great which the ſcripture makes little, and that little which the ſcripture makes great, tends to give us a monſtrous idea of religion; and (at leaſt indirectly and gradually) to lead us wholly away from the right rule, and from a right opinion of ourſelves, and to eſtabliſh deluſion and hypocriſy.

Argument V. Chriſtian practice *is plainly ſpoken of* in the *word of God*, as the main evidence of the truth of grace, not only to others, but to mens own conſciences. It is not only more ſpoken of and inſiſted on than other ſigns, but in many places where it is ſpoken of, it is repreſented as the chief of all evidences. This is plain in the manner of expreſſion from time to time. If God were now to ſpeak from heaven to reſolve our doubts concerning ſigns of godlineſs, and ſhould give ſome particular

* "It is a ſure rule, (ſays Dr. Preſton,) that what the ſcriptures beſtow much words on, we ſhould have much thoughts on; and what the Holy Ghoſt urgeth moſt, we ſhould prize moſt." *Church's Carriage.*

particular ſign, that by it all might know whether they were ſincerely godly or not, with ſuch emphatical expreſſions as theſe, The man that has ſuch a qualification or mark, *that is the man that is a true ſaint, that is the very man, by this you may know, this is the thing by which it is manifeſt who are ſaints and who are ſinners, ſuch men as theſe are ſaints indeed*; ſhould not we look upon it as a thing beyond doubt, that this was given as a ſpecial, and eminently diſtinguiſhing note of true godlineſs? But this is the very caſe with reſpect to the ſign of grace I am ſpeaking of; God has again and again uttered himſelf in his word in this very manner, concerning Chriſtian practice, as John xiv. "He that hath my commandments, and keep-"eth them, HE IT IS THAT LOVETH ME." This Chriſt in this place gives to the diſciples, not ſo much to guide them in judging of others, but to apply to themſelves for their own comfort after his departure, as appears by every word of the context. And by the way I would obſerve, that not only the emphaſis with which Chriſt utters himſelf is remarkable, but alſo his ſo much inſiſting on, and repeating the matter, as he does in the context; verſ. 15. "If ye love me, keep my com-"mandments." Verſ. 23. "If a man love me, he will keep my "words." And verſ. 24. "He that loveth me not, keepeth "not my ſayings." And in the next chapter over and over; verſ. 2. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh "away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it." Verſ. 8. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much "fruit, ſo ſhall ye be my diſciples." Verſ. 14. "Ye are my "friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you." We have this mark laid down with the ſame emphaſis again, John viii. 31. "If ye continue in my word, THEN are ye my diſciples "INDEED." And again, 1 John ii. 3. "HEREBY we do "know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." And verſ. 5. "Whoſo keepeth his word, IN HIM VERILY "is the love of God perfected: HEREBY know we that we "are in him." And chap. iii. 18, 19. "Let us love in deed, "and in truth: HEREBY we know that we are of the truth." What is tranſlated *hereby*, would have been a little more emphatical, if it had been rendered more literally from the original, BY THIS *we do know*.——And how evidently is holy practice ſpoken of as the grand note of diſtinction between the children of God and the children of the devil, in verſ. 10. of the ſame chapter? "IN THIS the children of God are

manifeſt,

" manifeſt, and the children of the devil." Speaking of a holy, and a wicked practice, as may be ſeen in all the context: as verſ. 3. "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth him-" ſelf, even as he is pure." Verſ. 6—10. " Whoſoever abi-" deth in him, ſinneth not: whoſoever ſinneth, hath not ſeen " him, neither known him. Little children, let no man de-" ceive you: he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, even as " he is righteous: he that committeth ſin, is of the devil.—" Whoſoever is born of God, ſinneth not.—Whoſoever doth " not righteouſneſs, is not of God." So we have the like emphaſis, 2 John 6. " THIS IS LOVE, that we walk after " his commandments:" that is, (as we muſt underſtand it,) *This is the proper evidence of love.* So 1 John v. 3. " THIS " IS THE LOVE OF GOD, that we keep his commandments." So the apoſtle James ſpeaking of the proper evidences of true and pure religion, ſays, Jam. i. 27. " Pure religion and " undefiled before God and the Father, IS THIS, To viſit the " fatherleſs and widows in their affliction, and to keep him-" ſelf unſpotted from the world." We have the like emphatical expreſſion uſed about the ſame thing in the Old Teſtament; Job xxviii. 28. " And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear " of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is un-" derſtanding." Jer. xxii. 15, 16. " Did not thy father eat " and drink, and do judgment and juſtice?—He judged the " cauſe of the poor and needy: was not this to know me? ſaith " the Lord." Pſal. xxxiv. 11. &c. " Come, ye children, " unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.—Keep " thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from ſpeaking guile: de-" part from evil, and do good: ſeek peace and purſue it." Pſal. xv. at the beginning. " Who ſhall abide in thy taber-" nacle? who ſhall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh " uprightly, &c." Pſal. xxiv. 3, 4. " Who ſhall aſcend in-" to the hill of the Lord? and who ſhall ſtand in his holy place? " He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, &c." Pſal. cxix. 1. " Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the " law of the Lord." Verſ. 6. " Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, " when I have reſpect to all thy commandments." Prov. viii. 13. " The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."

So the ſcripture never uſes ſuch emphatical expreſſions concerning any other ſigns of hypocriſy, and unſoundneſs of heart, as concerning an unholy practice. So Gal. vi. 7. " Be not " deceived; God is not mocked: for whatſoever a man ſow-

" eth,

" eth, that ſhall he alſo reap." 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. " Be not " deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, &c. ſhall in- " herit the kingdom of God." Eph. v. 5, 6. " For this ye " know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean perſon, &c. hath " any inheritance in the kingdom of Chriſt, and of God. Let " no man deceive you with vain words." 1 John iii. 7, 8. " Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doth righ- " teouſneſs, is righteous, even as he is righteous: he that com- " mitteth ſin, is of the devil." Chap. ii. 4. " He that ſaith, " I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, " and the truth is not in him." And Chap. i. 6. " If we " ſay that we have fellowſhip with him, and walk in darkneſs, " we lie, and do not the truth." James i. 26. " If any man " among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, " but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Chap. iii. 14, 15. " If ye have bitter envying and ſtrife in " your hearts, glory not, and lie not againſt the truth. This " wiſdom deſcendeth not from above, but is earthly, ſenſual, " deviliſh." Pſal. cxxv. 5. " As for ſuch as turn aſide un- " to their crooked ways, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with " the workers of iniquity." If. xxxv. 8. " An high way " ſhall be there, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs; the " unclean ſhall not paſs over it." Rev. xxi. 27. " And there " ſhall in no wiſe enter into it, whatſoever worketh abomina- " tion, or maketh a lie." And in many places, *Depart from me, I know you not, ye that work iniquity.*

Argument VI. Another thing which makes it evident, that holy practice is the chief of all the ſigns of the ſincerity of profeſſors, not only to the world, but to their own conſciences, is, that this is the grand evidence which will hereafter be made uſe of, before the judgment-ſeat of God; according to which his judgment will be regulated, and the ſtate of every profeſſor of religion unalterably determined. In the future judgment, there will be an open trial of profeſſors; and evidences will be made uſe of in the judgment. For God's future judging of men, in order to their eternal retribution, will not be his trying, and finding out, and paſſing a judgment upon the ſtate of mens hearts, in his own mind; but it will be a declarative judgment: and the end of it will be, not God's forming a judgment within himſelf, but the manifeſtation of his judgment, and the righteouſneſs of it, to mens own conſciences, and to the world. And therefore the day of judgment is called *the day of the* re-

velation

velation *of the righteous judgment of God*, Rom. ii. 5. And the end of God's future trial and judgment of men, as to the part that each one in particular is to have in the judgment, will be eſpecially the clear manifeſtation of God's righteous judgment, with reſpect to him, to his conſcience: as is manifeſt by Matth. xviii. 31. to the end. Chap. xx. 8—15. Chap. xxii. 11, 12, 13. Chap. xxv. 19—30. and ver. 35. to the end. Luke xix. 15—23. And therefore though God needs no medium, whereby to make the truth evident to himſelf, yet evidences will be made uſe of in his future judging of men. And doubtleſs the evidences that will be made uſe of in their trial, will be ſuch as will be beſt fitted to ſerve the ends of the judgment; *viz.* the manifeſtation of the righteous judgment of God, not only to the world, but to mens own conſciences. But the ſcriptures do abundantly teach us, that the grand evidences which the Judge will make uſe of in the trial, for theſe ends, according to which the judgment of every one ſhall be regulated, and the irreverſible ſentence paſſed, will be mens works, or practice, here in this world: Rev. xx. 12. "And I ſaw "the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God; and the books "were opened:—and the dead were judged out of thoſe things "which were written in the books, according to their works." So verſ. 13. "And the ſea gave up the dead which were in "it; and death and hell gave up the dead which were in them: "and they were judged every man according to their works." 2 Cor. v. 10. "For we muſt all appear before the judgment-"ſeat of Chriſt; that every one may receive the things done "in his body, whether it be good or bad." So mens practice is the only evidence that Chriſt repreſents the future judgment as regulated by, in that moſt particular deſcription of the day of judgment, which we have in the holy bible, Matth. xxv. at the latter end. See alſo Rom. ii. 6—13. Jer. xvii. 10. Job xxxiv. 11. Prov. xxiv. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Rev. xxii. 12. Matth. xvi. 27. Rev. ii. 23. Ezek. xxxiii. 20. 1 Pet. i. 17. The Judge at the day of judgment, will not (for the conviction of mens own conſciences, and to manifeſt them to the world,) go about to examine men, as to the method of their experiences, or ſet every man to tell his ſtory of the manner of his converſion; but his works will be brought forth, as evidences of what he is, what he has done in darkneſs and in light: Eccl. xii. 14. "For God will bring every work into judgment, "with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it

"be

" be evil." In the trial that profeſſors ſhall be the ſubjects of, in the future judgment, God will make uſe of the ſame evidences, to manifeſt them to themſelves and to the world, which he makes uſe of to manifeſt them, in the temptations or trials of his providence here, *viz.* their practice, in caſes wherein Chriſt and other things come into actual and immediate competition. At the day of judgment, God, for the manifeſtation of his righteous judgment, will weigh profeſſors in a balance that is viſible. And the balance will be the ſame that he weighs men in now; which has been already deſcribed.

Hence we may undoubtedly infer, that mens works (taken in the ſenſe that has been explained) are the higheſt evidences by which they ought to try themſelves.* Certainly that which our ſupreme Judge will chiefly make uſe of to judge us by, when we come to ſtand before him, we ſhould chiefly make uſe of, to judge ourſelves by.* If it had not been revealed in what manner, and by what evidence the Judge would proceed with us hereafter, how natural would it be for one to ſay, " O " that I knew what token God will chiefly look for and inſiſt " upon in the laſt and deciſive judgment, and which he ex- " pects that all ſhould be able to produce, who would then be " accepted of him, and according to which ſentence ſhall be " paſſed; that I might know what token or evidence eſpecially " to look at and ſeek after now, as I would be ſure not to fail " then." And ſeeing God has ſo plainly and abundantly revealed what this token or evidence is, ſurely if we act wiſely, we ſhall regard it as of the greateſt importance.

Now from all that has been ſaid, I think it to be abundantly manifeſt, that Chriſtian practice is the moſt proper evidence of the gracious ſincerity of profeſſors, to themſelves and others; and the chief of all the marks of grace, the ſign of ſigns, and evidence of evidences, that which ſeals and crowns all other ſigns.——I had rather have the teſtimony of my conſcience, that I have ſuch a ſaying of my ſupreme Judge on my ſide, as that, John xiv. 21. " He that hath my commandments, and " keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;" than the judgment and

* " That which God maketh a rule of his own judgment, as that by which he judgeth of every man, that is a ſure rule for every man to judge himſelf by. That which we ſhall be judged by at the laſt day, is a ſure rule to apply to ourſelves for the preſent. Now by our obedience and works he judgeth us. " He will give to every " man according to his works." *Dr. Preſton's Church's Carriage.*

and fulleſt approbation of all the wiſe, ſound, and experienced divines, that have lived this thouſand years, on the moſt exact and critical examination of my experiences, as to the manner of my converſion. Not that there are no other good evidences of a ſtate of grace but this. There may be other exerciſes of grace, beſides theſe efficient exerciſes, which the ſaints may have in contemplation, that may be very ſatisfying to them: but yet this is the chief and moſt proper evidence. There may be ſeveral good evidences that a tree is a fig-tree; but the higheſt and moſt proper evidence of it is, that it actually bears figs. It is poſſible, that a man may have a good aſſurance of a ſtate of grace, at his firſt converſion, before he has had opportunity to gain aſſurance, by this great evidence I am ſpeaking of.—If a man hears that a great treaſure is offered him, in a diſtant place, on condition that he will prize it ſo much, as to be willing to leave what he poſſeſſes at home, and go a journey for it, over the rocks and mountains that are in the way, to the place where it is; it is poſſible the man may be well aſſured, that he values the treaſures to the degree ſpoken of, as ſoon as the offer is made him: he may feel a willingneſs to go for the treaſure, within him, beyond all doubt: but yet, this does not hinder but that his actual going for it, is the higheſt and moſt proper evidence of his being willing, not only to others, but to himſelf. But then as an evidence to himſelf, his outward actions, and the motions of his body in his journey, are not conſidered alone, excluſive of the action of his mind, and a conſciouſneſs within himſelf, of the thing that moves him, and the end he goes for; otherwiſe his bodily motion is no evidence to him, of his prizing the treaſure. In ſuch a manner is Chriſtian practice the moſt proper evidence of a ſaving value of *the pearl of great price, and treaſure hid in the field.*

Chriſtian practice is the ſign of ſigns, in this ſenſe, that it is the great evidence, which confirms and crowns all other ſigns of godlineſs. There is no one grace of the Spirit of God, but that Chriſtian practice is the moſt proper evidence of the truth of it. As it is with the members of our bodies, and all our utenſils, the proper proof of the ſoundneſs and goodneſs of them, is in the uſe of them; ſo it is with our graces, (which are given to be uſed in practice, as much as our hands and feet, or the tools with which we work, or the arms with which we fight,) the proper trial and proof of them is in their exerciſe in practice. Moſt of the things we uſe are ſerviceable to us,

and

and ſo have their ſerviceableneſs proved, in ſome preſſure, ſtraining, agitation, or colliſion. So it is with a bow, a ſword, an ax, a ſaw, a cord, a chain, a ſtaff, a foot, a tooth, &c. And they that are ſo weak, as not to bear the ſtrain or preſſure we need to put them to, are good for nothing. So it is with all the virtues of the mind. The proper trial and proof of them, is in being exerciſed under thoſe temptations and trials that God brings us under, in the courſe of his providence, and in being put to ſuch ſervice as ſtrains hard upon the principles of nature.

Practice is the proper proof of the true and ſaving *knowlege of God:* as appears by that of the apoſtle already mentioned, *Hereby do we know that we know him, that we keep his commandments.* It is in vain for us to *profeſs that we know God*, if *in works we deny him*, Tit. i. 16. And if we *know God, but glorify him not as God*; our knowlege will only condemn us, and not ſave us, Rom. i. 21. The great note of that knowlege which ſaves and makes happy, is, that it is practical; John xiii. 17. "If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye "do them." Job. xxviii. 28. "To depart from evil is under-"ſtanding."

Holy practice is the proper evidence of *repentance*. When the Jews profeſſed repentance, when they came confeſſing their ſins, to John, preaching the baptiſm of repentance for the remiſſion of ſins; he directed them to the right way of getting and exhibiting proper evidences of the truth of their repentance, when he ſaid to them, "Bring forth fruits meet for repent-"ance," Matth. iii. 8. Which was agreeable to the practice of the apoſtle Paul; ſee Acts xxvi. 20. Pardon and mercy are from time to time promiſed to him who has this evidence of true repentance, that he forſakes his ſin; Prov. xxviii. 13. and Iſ. lv. 7. and many other places.

Holy practice is the proper evidence of a *ſaving faith*. It is evident that the apoſtle James ſpeaks of works, as what does eminently juſtify faith, or (which is the ſame thing) juſtify the profeſſors of faith, and vindicate and manifeſt the ſincerity of their profeſſion, not only to the world, but to their own conſciences: as is evident by the inſtance he gives of Abraham, Jam. ii. 21—24. And in verſ. 20. and 26. he ſpeaks of the practical and working nature of faith, as the very life and ſoul of it; in the ſame manner, that the active nature and ſubſtance, which is in the body of a man, is the life and ſoul of that.

And if ſo, doubtleſs practice is the proper evidence of the life and ſoul of true faith, by which it is diſtinguiſhed from a dead faith. For doubtleſs practice is the moſt proper evidence of a practical nature, and operation the moſt proper evidence of an operative nature.

Practice is the beſt evidence of a ſaving *belief of the truth.* That is ſpoken of as the proper evidence of the *truth's being in* a profeſſing Chriſtian, that *he walks in the truth*, 3 John 3. "I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and teſtified of "the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkeſt in the truth."

Practice is the moſt proper evidence of a true *coming to Chriſt*, and *accepting* of, and *cloſing* with him. A true and ſaving coming to Chriſt, is (as Chriſt often teaches) a coming ſo, as to forſake all for him. And as was obſerved before, to forſake all for Chriſt in heart, is the ſame thing as to have a heart actually to forſake all; but the proper evidence of having a heart actually to forſake all, is indeed actually to forſake all, ſo far as called to it. If a prince make ſuit to a woman in a far country, that ſhe would forſake her own people, and father's houſe, and come to him, to be his bride; the proper evidence of the compliance of her heart with the king's ſuit, is her actually forſaking her own people, and father's houſe, and coming to him. By this, her compliance with the king's ſuit is made perfect, in the ſame ſenſe that the apoſtle James ſays, *by works is faith made perfect.** Chriſt promiſes us eternal life, on condition of our coming to him: but it is ſuch a coming as he directed the young man to, who came to enquire, *what he ſhall do, that he might have eternal life*; Chriſt bid him *go and ſell all that he had, and come to him, and follow him.* If he had conſented in his heart to the propoſal, (and had therein come to Chriſt in his heart,) the proper evidence of it would have been

* "Our real taking of Chriſt, appears in our actions and works; Iſ. i. 19. "If ye conſent and obey, ye ſhall eat the good things of "the land." That is, If ye will conſent to take JEHOVAH for your Lord and King: *if ye give conſent*; there is the firſt thing: but that is not enough; *but if ye alſo obey.* The conſent that ſtandeth in the inward act of the mind, the truth of it will be ſeen in your obedience, in the acts of your lives. *If ye conſent and obey, ye ſhall eat the good things of the land*; that is, you ſhall take of all that he hath that is convenient for you: for then you are married to him in truth, and have an intereſt in all his goods." *Dr. Preſton's Church's Carriage.*

been his doing of it: and therein his coming to Chriſt would have been made perfect. When Chriſt called Levi the publican, when ſitting at the receipt of cuſtom, and in the midſt of his worldly gains; the cloſing of Levi's heart with this invitation of his Saviour, to come to him, was manifeſted, and made perfect, by his actually riſing up, leaving all, and following him, Luke v. 27, 28. Chriſt and other things, are ſet before us together, for us practically to cleave to one, and forſake the other: in ſuch a caſe, a practical cleaving to Chriſt, is a practical *acceptance* of Chriſt; as much as a beggar's reaching out his hand, and taking a gift that is offered, is his practical acceptance of the gift. Yea, that act of the ſoul that is in cleaving to Chriſt for practice, is itſelf the moſt perfect coming of the ſoul to Chriſt.

Practice is the moſt proper evidence of *truſting in Chriſt for ſalvation*. The proper ſignification of the word *truſt*, according to the more ordinary uſe of it, both in common ſpeech, and in the holy ſcriptures, is the emboldening and encouragement of a perſon's mind, to run ſome venture in practice, or in ſomething that he does, on the credit of another's ſufficiency and faithfulneſs. And therefore the proper evidence of his truſting, is *the venture he runs in what he does*. He is not properly ſaid to run any venture, in a dependence on any thing, that does nothing on that dependence, or whoſe practice is no otherwiſe than if he had no dependence. For a man to run a venture, on a dependence on another, is for him to do ſomething from that dependence, by which he ſeems to expoſe himſelf, and which he would not do, were it not for that dependence. And therefore it is in complying with the difficulties, and ſeeming dangers of Chriſtian practice, in a dependence on Chriſt's ſufficiency and faithfulneſs to beſtow eternal life, that perſons are ſaid to venture themſelves upon Chriſt, and truſt in him for happineſs and life. They depend on ſuch promiſes as that, Matth. x. 39. "He that loſeth his life for my ſake, ſhall "find it." And ſo they part with all, and venture their all, in a dependence on Chriſt's ſufficiency and truth. And this is the ſcripture notion of truſting in Chriſt, in the exerciſe of a ſaving faith in him. Thus Abraham, the father of believers, truſted in Chriſt, and by faith forſook his own country, in a reliance on the covenant of grace God eſtabliſhed with him, Heb. xi. 8, 9. Thus alſo "Moſes, by faith refuſed to be "called the ſon of Pharaoh's daughter, chooſing rather to ſuf-

"fer

" fer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the plea-
" ſures of ſin for a ſeaſon," Heb. xi. 23, &c. So *by faith*, others expoſed themſelves to be *ſtoned* and *ſawn in ſunder*, or *ſlain with the ſword:* endured the *trial of cruel mockings and ſcourgings, bonds and impriſonments, and wandered about in ſheep-ſkins and goat-ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented.* And in this ſenſe the apoſtle Paul, by faith, truſted in Chriſt, and committed himſelf to him, venturing himſelf, and his whole intereſt, in a dependence on the ability and faithfulneſs of his Redeemer, under great perſecutions, and in ſuffering the loſs of all things; 2 Tim. i. 12, " For the which cauſe I alſo ſuffer
" theſe things; nevertheleſs I am not aſhamed: for I know
" whom I have believed, and I am perſuaded that he is able to
" keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that
" day."

If a man ſhould have word brought him from the king of a diſtant land, that he intended to make him his heir, if upon receiving the tidings, he immediately leaves his native land, and friends, and all that he has in the world, to go to that country, in a dependence on what he hears; then he may be ſaid to venture himſelf, and all he has in the world upon it. But if he only ſits ſtill, and hopes for the promiſed benefit, inwardly pleaſing himſelf with the thoughts of it; he cannot properly be ſaid to venture himſelf upon it; he runs no venture in the caſe; he does nothing, otherwiſe than he would do, if he had received no ſuch tidings, by which he would be expoſed to any ſuffering, in caſe all ſhould fail. So he that on the credit of what he hears of a future world, and in a dependence on the report of the goſpel, concerning life and immortality, forſakes all, or does ſo at leaſt ſo far as there is occaſion, making every thing entirely give place to his eternal intereſt; he, and he only, may properly be ſaid to venture himſelf on the report of the goſpel. And this is the proper evidence of a true truſt in Chriſt for ſalvation.

Practice is the proper evidence of a *gracious love*, both to God and men. The texts that plainly teach this, have been ſo often mentioned already, that it is needleſs to repeat them.

Practice is the proper evidence of *humility*. That expreſſion and manifeſtation of humility of heart, which God ſpeaks of, as the great expreſſion of it, that he inſiſts on; that we ſhould look upon as the proper expreſſion and manifeſtation of it; but this is *walking humbly*; Micah vi. 8. " He hath ſhewed
" thee,

" thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord re-
" quire of thee, but to do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk
" humbly with thy God?"

This is alſo the proper evidence of the true *fear of God.* Prov. viii. 13. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." Pſal. xxxiv. 11, &c. "Come ye children, hearken unto me, and
" I will teach you the fear of the Lord.——Keep thy tongue
" from evil, and thy lips from ſpeaking guile: depart from
" evil, and do good; ſeek peace and purſue it." Prov. iii. 7.
" Fear the Lord, and depart from evil." Prov. xvi. 6. "By
" the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil." Job i. 8. "Haſt
" thou conſidered my ſervant Job——a perfect and an upright
" man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil?" Chap. ii. 3. "Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job——a perfect and an
" upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil? and
" ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me
" againſt him." Pſal. xxxvi. 1. "The tranſgreſſion of the
" wicked ſaith within my heart, there is no fear of God before
" his eyes."

So practice, in rendering again according to benefits received, is the proper evidence of true *thankfulneſs.* Pſal. cxvi. 12. "What ſhall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits
" towards me?" 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. "But Hezekiah ren-
" dered not again, according to the benefit done unto him." Paying our vows unto God, and ordering our converſation aright, ſeem to be ſpoken of, as the proper expreſſion and evidence of true thankfulneſs, in the 50th Pſalm, verſ. 14. "Of-
" fer unto God thankſgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Moſt
" High." verſ. 23. "Whoſo offereth praiſe, glorifieth me:
" and to him that ordereth his converſation aright, will I ſhew
" the ſalvation of God."

So the proper evidence of *gracious deſires and longings*, and that which diſtinguiſhes them from thoſe that are falſe and vain, is, that they are not idle wiſhes and wouldings, like Balaam's; but effectual in practice, to ſtir up perſons earneſtly and thoroughly to ſeek the things they long for. Pſal. xxvii. 4. "One
" thing have I deſired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after." Pſal. lxiii. 1, 2. "O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee:
" my ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee in a dry
" and thirſty land, where no water is, to ſee thy power and thy
" glory." verſ. 8. "My ſoul followeth hard after thee." Cant. i. 4. "Draw me, we will run after thee."

Practice

Practice is the proper evidence of gracious *hope*. 1 John iii. 3. "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth him-"self, even as he is pure." Patient continuance in well-doing, through the difficulties and trials of the Chriſtian courſe, is often mentioned as the proper expreſſion and fruit of a Chriſtian hope; 1 Theſſ. i. 3. "Remembering without ceaſing "your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of "hope." 1 Pet. i. 13, 14. "Wherefore gird up the loins of "your mind, be ſober, and hope to the end, for the grace that "is to be brought unto you, at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt; "as obedient children, &c." Pſal. cxix. 166. "Lord, I have "hoped in thy ſalvation, and done thy commandments." Pſal. lxxviii. 7. "That they might ſet their hope in God, and not "forget the works of the Lord; but keep his commandments."

A chearful practice of our duty and doing the will of God, is the proper evidence of a truly *holy joy*. Iſ. lxiv. 5. "Thou "meeteſt him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteouſneſs." Pſal. cxix. 111, 112. "Thy teſtimonies have I taken for my "heritage for ever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart. "I have inclined mine heart to perform thy ſtatutes alway, "even unto the end." Verſ. 14. "I have rejoiced in the "way of thy teſtimonies, as much as in all riches." 1 Cor. xiii. 6. "Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth "in the truth." 2 Cor. viii. 2. "The abundance of their "joy, abounded unto the riches of their liberality."

Practice alſo is the proper evidence of Chriſtian *fortitude*. The trial of a good ſoldier, is not in his chimney corner, but in the field of battle; 1 Cor. ix. 25, 26. 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4, 5.

And as the fruit of holy practice is the chief evidence of the truth of grace; ſo the degree in which experiences have influence on a perſon's practice, is the ſureſt evidence of the degree of that which is ſpiritual and divine in his experiences. Whatever pretences perſons may make to great diſcoveries, great love and joys, they are no further to be regarded, than they have influence on their practice. Not but that allowances muſt be made for the natural temper. But that does not hinder, but that the degree of grace is juſtly meaſured, by the degree of the effect in practice. For the effect of grace is as great, and the alteration as remarkable, in a perſon of a very ill natural temper, as another. Although a perſon of ſuch a temper, will not behave himſelf ſo well, with the ſame degree of grace, as another; the diverſity from what was before converſion,

may

may be as great; becauſe a perſon of a good natural temper did not behave himſelf ſo ill, before converſion.

Thus I have endeavoured to repreſent the evidence there is that Chriſtian practice is *the chief* of all the ſigns of ſaving grace, And before I conclude this diſcourſe, I would ſay ſomething briefly, in anſwer to two objections, that may poſſibly be made by ſome, againſt what has been ſaid upon this head.

Object. 1. Some may be ready to ſay, this ſeems to be contrary to that opinion, ſo much received among good people; that profeſſors ſhould judge of their ſtate, chiefly by their inward experience, and that ſpiritual experiences are the main evidences of true grace.

I anſwer, It is doubtleſs a true opinion, and juſtly much received among good people, that profeſſors ſhould chiefly judge of their ſtate by their experience. But it is a great miſtake, that what has been ſaid is at all contrary to that opinion. The chief ſign of grace to the conſciences of Chriſtians, being Chriſtian practice, in the ſenſe that has been explained, and according to what has been ſhewn to be the true notion of Chriſtian practice, is not at all inconſiſtent with Chriſtian experience being the chief evidence of grace. Chriſtian or holy practice is ſpiritual practice; and that is not the motion of a body, that knows not how, nor when, nor wherefore it moves: but ſpiritual practice in man, is the practice of a ſpirit and body jointly, or the practice of a ſpirit, animating, commanding and actuating a body, to which it is united, and over which it has power given it by the Creator. And therefore the main thing in this holy practice, is the holy acts of the mind, directing and governing the motions of the body. And the motions of the body are to be looked upon as belonging to Chriſtian practice, only ſecondarily, and as they are dependent and conſequent on the acts of the ſoul. The exerciſes of grace that Chriſtians find, or are conſcious to, within themſelves, are what they *experience* within themſelves; and herein therefore lies Chriſtian experience: and this Chriſtian experience, conſiſts as much in thoſe operative exerciſes of grace in the will, that are immediately concerned in the management of the behaviour of the body, as in other exerciſes. Theſe inward exerciſes, are not the leſs a part of Chriſtian experience, becauſe they have outward behaviour immediately connected with them. A ſtrong act of love to God, is not the leſs a part of ſpiritual experience, becauſe it is the act that immediately

produces

produces and effects ſome ſelf denying and expenſive outward action, which is much to the honor and glory of God.

To ſpeak of Chriſtian experience and practice, as if they were two things, properly and entirely diſtinct, is to make a diſtinction without conſideration or reaſon. Indeed all Chriſtian experience, is not properly called practice; but all Chriſtian practice is properly experience. And the diſtinction that is made between them, is not only an unreaſonable, but an unſcriptural diſtinction. Holy practice is one kind or part of Chriſtian experience; and both reaſon and ſcripture repreſent it as the chief, and moſt important, and moſt diſtinguiſhing part of it. So it is repreſented in Jer. xxii. 15, 16. "Did "not thy father eat and drink, and do juſtice and judgment?— "He judged the cauſe of the poor and needy:—was not this "to know me? ſaith the Lord." Our inward acquaintance with God, ſurely belongs to the head of experimental religion; but this God repreſents, as conſiſting chiefly in that experience which there is in holy practice. So the exerciſes of thoſe graces of the love of God, and the fear of God, are a part of experimental religion; but theſe the ſcripture repreſents as conſiſting chiefly in practice, in thoſe forementioned texts. 1 John v. 3. "This is the love of God, that we keep his "commandments." 2 John 6. "This is love, that we walk "after his commandments." Pſal. xxxiv. 11, *&c.* "Come, ye "children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord:—De- "part from evil, and do good." Such experiences as theſe Hezekiah took comfort in chiefly, on his ſick-bead; when he ſaid, *Remember, O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.* And ſuch experiences as theſe, the Pſalmiſt chiefly inſiſts upon, in the 119th Pſalm, and elſewhere. Such experiences as theſe, the apoſtle Paul mainly inſiſts upon, when he ſpeaks of his experiences in his epiſtles; as Rom. i. 9. "God is my witneſs, whom I ſerve "with my ſpirit in the goſpel of his Son."—2 Cor. i. 12. "For our rejoicing is this, the teſtimony of our conſcience, "that—by the grace of God, we have had our converſation in "the world." Chap. iv. 13. "We having the ſame ſpirit of "faith, according as it is written, I have believed, and there- "fore have I ſpoken: we alſo believe, and therefore ſpeak." Chap. v. 7. "We walk by faith, not by ſight." Verſ. 14. "The love of Chriſt conſtraineth us." Chap. vi. 4—7. "In "all things approving ourſelves as the miniſters of God, in-

"much

" much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes,—
" in labours, in watchings, in faſtings. By pureneſs, by know-
" lege, by kindneſs, by the Holy Ghoſt, by love unfeigned,—
" by the power of God." Gal. ii. 20. " I am crucified with
" Chriſt: Nevertheleſs I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in
" me: and the life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the
" faith of the Son of God." Phil. iii. 7, 8. " But what things
" were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt. Yea doubt-
" leſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of
" the knowlege of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, and do count them
" but dung that I may win Chriſt." Col. i. 29. " Whereunto
" I alſo labour, ſtriving according to his working, which
" worketh in me mightily." 1 Theſſ. ii. 2. " We were bold
" in our God, to ſpeak unto you the goſpel of God with much
" contention." Verſ. 8, 9, 10. " Being affectionately deſir-
" ous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not
" the goſpel of God only, but alſo our own ſouls, becauſe ye
" were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour
" and travel, labouring night and day.—Ye are witneſſes, and
" God alſo, how holily, and juſtly, and unblameably we be-
" haved ourſelves among you." And ſuch experiences as
theſe they were, that this bleſſed apoſtle chiefly comforted him-
ſelf in the conſideration of, when he was going to martyrdom,
2 Tim. iv. 6, 7. " For I am now ready to be offered, and the
" time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good
" fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith."

And not only does the moſt important and diſtinguiſhing part of Chriſtian experience, lie in ſpiritual practice; but ſuch is the nature of that ſort of exerciſes of grace, wherein ſpiritual practice conſiſts, that nothing is ſo properly called by the name of *experimental religion*. For that experience which is in theſe exerciſes of grace, that are found, and prove effectual, at the very point of trial, wherein God proves which we will actually cleave to, whether Chriſt or our luſts, are, as has been ſhown already, the proper *experiment* of the truth and power of our godlineſs; wherein its victorious power and efficacy, in producing its proper effect, and reaching its end, is found *by experience*. This is properly Chriſtian experience, wherein the ſaints have opportunity to ſee, by actual *experience and trial*, whether they have a heart to do the will of God, and to forſake other things for Chriſt, or no. As that is called experimental philoſophy, which brings opinions and notions to the teſt

of Jeſus our

fact; ſo is that properly called experimental religion, which brings religious affections and intentions to the like teſt.

There is a ſort of external religious practice, wherein is no inward experience; which no account is made of in the ſight of God; but it is eſteemed good for nothing. And there is what is called experience, that is without practice, being neither accompanied, nor followed with a Chriſtian behaviour; and this is worſe than nothing. Many perſons ſeem to have very wrong notions of Chriſtian experience, and ſpiritual light and diſcoveries. Whenever a perſon finds within him, an heart to treat God as God, at the time that he has the trial, and finds his diſpoſition effectual in the experiment, that is the moſt proper, and moſt diſtinguiſhing experience. And to have at ſuch a time that ſenſe of divine things, that apprehenſion of the truth, importance and excellency of the things of religion, which then ſways and prevails, and governs his heart and hands; this is the moſt excellent ſpiritual light, and theſe are the moſt diſtinguiſhing diſcoveries. Religion conſiſts much in holy affection; but thoſe exerciſes of affection which are moſt diſtinguiſhing of true religion, are theſe practical exerciſes. Friendſhip between earthly friends conſiſts much in affection; but yet thoſe ſtrong exerciſes of affection, that actually carry them through fire and water for each other, are the higheſt evidences of true friendſhip.

There is nothing in what has been ſaid, contrary to what is aſſerted by ſome ſound divines; when they ſay, that there are no ſure evidences of grace, but the acts of grace. For that doth not hinder but that theſe operative, productive acts, thoſe exerciſes of grace that are effectual in practice, may be the higheſt evidences, above all other kinds of acts of grace. Nor does it hinder but that, when there are many of theſe acts and exerciſes, following one another in a courſe, under various trials, of every kind, the evidence is ſtill heightened; as one act confirms another. A man by once ſeeing his neighbour, may have good evidence of his preſence: but by ſeeing him from day to day, and converſing with him in a courſe, in various circumſtances, the evidence is eſtabliſhed. The diſciples, when they firſt ſaw Chriſt, after his reſurrection, had good evidence that he was alive: but by converſing with him for forty days, and his *ſhewing himſelf to them alive, by many infallible proofs*, they had yet higher evidence.* The

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* "The more theſe viſible exerciſes of grace are renewed, the more

The witneſs or ſeal of the Spirit that we read of, doubtleſs conſiſts in the effect of the Spirit of God in the heart, in the implantation and exerciſes of grace there, and ſo conſiſts in experience. And it is alſo beyond doubt, that this ſeal of the Spirit, is the higheſt kind of evidence of the ſaints adoption, that ever they obtain. But in theſe exerciſes of grace in practice, that have been ſpoken of, God gives witneſs, and ſets to his ſeal, in the moſt conſpicuous, eminent, and evident manner. It has been abundantly found to be true in fact, by the experience of the Chriſtian church, that Chriſt commonly gives, by his Spirit, the greateſt and moſt joyful evidences to his ſaints of their ſonſhip, in thoſe effectual exerciſes of grace under trials, which have been ſpoken of; as is manifeſt in the full aſſurance, and unſpeakable joys of many of the martyrs. Agreeable to that, 1 Pet. iv. 14. "If ye are reproached for the name "of Chriſt, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of "God reſteth upon you." And that in Rom. v. 2, 3. "We "rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and glory in tribulations." And agreeable to what the apoſtle Paul often declares of what he experienced in his trials. And when the apoſtle Peter, in my text, ſpeaks of the *joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*, which the Chriſtians to whom he wrote, experienced; he has reſpect to what they found under perſecution, as appears by the context. Chriſt's thus manifeſting himſelf, as the friend and ſaviour of his ſaints, cleaving to him under trials, ſeems to have been repreſented of old, by his coming and manifeſting himſelf, to Shadrach, Meſhach, and Abednego, in the furnace. And when

more certain you will be. The more frequently theſe actings are renewed, the more abiding and confirmed your aſſurance will be. A man that has been aſſured of ſuch viſible exerciſes of grace, may quickly after be in doubt, whether he was not miſtaken. But when ſuch actings are renewed again and again, he grows more ſettled and eſtabliſhed about his good eſtate. If a man ſee a thing once, that makes him ſure; but if afterwards he fear he was deceived, when he comes to ſee it again, he is more ſure he was not miſtaken. If a man read ſuch paſſages in a book, he is ſure it is ſo. Some months after, ſome may bear him down, that he was miſtaken, ſo as to make him queſtion it himſelf: but when he looks, and reads it again, he is abundantly confirmed. The more mens grace is multiplied, the more their peace is multiplied; 2 Pet. i. 2. "Grace and peace be "multiplied unto you, through the knowlege of God and Jeſus our "Lord." *Stoddard's Way to know ſincerity and hypocriſy.*

when the apoſtle ſpeaks of the witneſs of the Spirit, in Rom. viii. 15, 16, 17. he has a more immediate reſpect to what the Chriſtians experienced, in their exerciſes of love to God, in ſuffering perſecution; as is plain by the context. He is, in the foregoing verſes, encouraging the Chriſtian Romans under their ſufferings, that though their bodies be dead, becauſe of ſin, yet they ſhould be raiſed to life again. But it is more eſpecially plain by the verſe immediately following, verſ. 18. "For I reckon, that the ſufferings of this preſent time, are "not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be re-"vealed in us." So the apoſtle has evidently reſpect to their perſecutions, in all that he ſays to the end of the chapter. So when the apoſtle ſpeaks of the *earneſt of the Spirit*, which God had given to him, in 2 Cor. v. 5. the context ſhews plainly that he has reſpect to what was given him in his great trials and ſufferings. And in that promiſe of *the white ſtone, and new name, to him that overcomes*, Rev. ii. 17. it is evident Chriſt has a ſpecial reſpect to a benefit that Chriſtians ſhould obtain, by overcoming, in the trial they had, in that day of perſecution. This appears by verſ. 13. and many other paſſages in this epiſtle to the ſeven churches of Aſia.

Object. 2. Some alſo may be ready to object againſt what has been ſaid of Chriſtian practice being the chief evidence of the truth of grace, that this is a *legal* doctrine; and that this making practice a thing of ſuch great importance in religion, magnifies *works*, and tends to lead men to make too much of their *own doings*, to the diminution of the glory of free grace, and does not ſeem well to conſiſt with that great goſpel-doctrine of *juſtification by faith alone*.

But this objection is altogether without reaſon. Which way is it inconſiſtent with the freeneſs of God's grace, that holy practice ſhould be a ſign of God's grace? It is our works being the *price* of God's favour, and not their being the *ſign* of it, that is the thing which is inconſiſtent with the freeneſs of that favour. Surely the beggar's looking on the money he has in his hands, as a *ſign* of the kindneſs of him who gave it to him, is in no reſpect inconſiſtent with the freeneſs of that kindneſs. It is his having money in his hand as the price of a benefit, that is the thing which is inconſiſtent with the free kindneſs of the giver. The notion of the freeneſs of the grace of God to ſinners, as that is revealed and taught in the goſpel, is not that no holy and amiable qualifications or actions in us

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ſhall be a fruit, and ſo a ſign of that grace; but that it is not the worthineſs or lovelineſs of any qualification or action of ours which recommends us to that grace; that kindneſs is ſhown to the unworthy and unlovely; that there is great excellency in the benefit beſtowed, and no excellency in the ſubject as the price of it; that goodneſs goes forth and flows out, from the fulneſs of God's nature, the fulneſs of the fountain of good, without any amiableneſs in the object to darw it. And this is the notion of juſtification without works, (as this doctrine is taught in the ſcripture,) that it is not the worthineſs or lovelineſs of our works, or any thing in us, which is in any wiſe accepted with God, as a *balance* for the guilt of ſin, or a recommendation of ſinners to his acceptance as heirs of life. Thus we are juſtified only by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and not by our righteouſneſs. And when works are oppoſed to faith in this affair, and it is ſaid that we are juſtified by faith and not by works; thereby is meant, that it is not the worthineſs or amiableneſs of our works, or any thing in us, which recommends us to an intereſt in Chriſt and his benefits; but that we have this intereſt only by faith, or by our ſouls receiving Chriſt, or adhering to, and cloſing with him. But that the worthineſs or amiableneſs of nothing in us recommends and brings us to an intereſt in Chriſt, is no argument that nothing in us is a ſign of an intereſt in Chriſt.

If the doctrines of free grace, and juſtification by faith alone, be inconſiſtent with the importance of holy practice as a ſign of grace; then they are equally inconſiſtent with the importance of any thing whatſoever in us as a ſign of grace, any holineſs, or any grace that is in us, or any of our experiences or religion: for it is as contrary to the doctrines of free grace and juſtification by faith alone, that any of theſe ſhould be the righteouſneſs which we are juſtified by, as that holy practice ſhould be ſo. It is with holy works, as it is with holy qualifications: it is inconſiſtent with the freeneſs of goſpel-grace, that a title to ſalvation ſhould be given to men for the lovelineſs of any of their holy qualifications, as much as that it ſhould be given for the holineſs of their works. It is inconſiſtent with the goſpel-doctrine of free grace, that an intereſt in Chriſt and his benefits ſhould be given for the lovelineſs of a man's true holineſs, for the amiableneſs of his renewed, ſanctified, heavenly heart, his love to God, and being like God, or his experience of joy in the Holy Ghoſt, ſelf-emptineſs, a ſpirit to exalt Chriſt

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above all, and to give all glory to him, and a heart devoted unto him: I ſay, it is inconſiſtent with the goſpel-doctrine of free grace, that a title to Chriſt's benefits ſhould be given out of regard to the lovelineſs of any of theſe, or that any of theſe ſhould be our righteouſneſs in the affair of juſtification. And yet this does not hinder the importance of theſe things as evidences of an intereſt in Chriſt. Juſt ſo it is with reſpect to holy actions and works. To make light of works, becauſe we be not juſtified by works, is the ſame thing in effect, as to make light of all religion, all grace and holineſs, yea, true evangelical holineſs, and all gracious experience: for all is included, when the ſcripture ſays, we are not juſtified by works: for by works in this caſe, is meant all our own righteouſneſs, religion, or holineſs, and every thing that *is in us*, all the good we do, and all the good which we are conſcious of, all external acts, and all internal acts and exerciſe of grace, and all experiences, and all thoſe holy and heavenly things wherein the life and power, and the very eſſence of religion do conſiſt, all thoſe great things which Chriſt and his apoſtles mainly inſiſted on in their preaching, and endeavoured to promote, as of the greateſt conſequence in the hearts and lives of men, and all good diſpoſitions, exerciſes and qualifications of every kind whatſoever; and even faith itſelf, conſidered as a part of our holineſs. For we are juſtified by none of theſe things: and if we were, we ſhould, in a ſcripture-ſenſe, be juſtified by works. And therefore if it be not legal, and contrary to the evangelical doctrine of juſtification without works, to inſiſt on any of theſe, as of great importance, as evidences of an intereſt in Chriſt; then no more is it thus, to inſiſt on the importance of holy practice. It would be legal to ſuppoſe, that holy practice juſtifies by bringing us to a title to Chriſt's benefits, as the price of it, or as recommending to it by its preciouſneſs or excellence; but it is not legal to ſuppoſe, that holy practice juſtifies the ſincerity of a believer, as the proper evidence of it. The apoſtle James did not think it legal to ſay, that *Abraham our father was juſtified by works*, in this ſenſe. The Spirit that indited the ſcripture, did not think the great importance and abſolute neceſſity of holy practice, in this reſpect, to be inconſiſtent with the freeneſs of grace; for it commonly teaches them both together; as in Rev. xxi. 6, 7. God ſays, "I will give unto him that is athirſt, "of the fountain of the water of life freely;" and then adds, in the very next words, "He that overcometh ſhall inherit all "things."

" things." As though behaving well in the Chriſtian race and warfare, were the condition of the promiſe. So in the next chapter, in the 14th and 15th verſes, Chriſt ſays, " Bleſſed are " they that do his commandments, that they may have right to " the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city:" and then declares in the 15th verſe, " how they that are of a " wicked practice" ſhall be excluded; and yet in the two verſes next following, does with very great ſolemnity, give forth an invitation to all to come and take of the water of life freely; " I " am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morn- " ing-ſtar. And the Spirit and the bride ſay, come. And " let him that heareth, ſay, come. And let him that is athirſt, " come: and whoſoever will, let him come and take of the " water of life freely." So chap. iii. 20, 21. " Behold, I " ſtand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, " and open the door, I will come in to him, and ſup with him, " and he with me." But then it is added in the next words, " To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me in my " throne." And in that great invitation of Chriſt, Matth. xi. latter end, " Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy " laden, and I will give you reſt;" Chriſt adds in the next words, " Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am " meek and lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your " ſouls: for my yoke is eaſy, and my burden is light:" as though taking the burden of Chriſt's ſervice, and imitating his example, were neceſſary in order to the promiſed reſt. So in that great invitation to ſinners to accept of free grace; Iſ. lv. " Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he " that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy " wine and milk without money, and without price:" even there, in the continuation of the ſame invitation, the ſinner's forſaking his wicked practice is ſpoken of as neceſſary to the obtaining mercy; verſ. 7. " Let the wicked forſake his way, " and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return " unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to " our God, for he will abundantly pardon." So the riches of divine grace, in the juſtification of ſinners, is ſet forth, with the neceſſity of holy practice, Iſ. i. 16, *&c.* " Waſh ye, make " you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before " mine eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, ſeek judgment, " relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the wi- " dow. Come now, let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord:

" though

" though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow;
" though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool." And in that moſt ſolemn invitation of Wiſdom, Prov. ix. after it is repreſented what great proviſion is made, and how that all things were ready, the houſe built, the beaſts killed, the wine mingled, and the table furniſhed, and the meſſengers ſent forth to invite the gueſts; then we have the free invitation, verſ. 4, 5, 6. " Whoſo is ſimple, let him turn in hither: as for him that
" wanteth underſtanding, (*i. e.* has no righteouſneſs) ſhe ſaith
" to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which
" I have mingled." But then in the next breath it follows,
" Forſake the fooliſh, and live; and go in the way of under-
" ſtanding:" as though forſaking ſin, and going in the way of holineſs, were neceſſary in order to life. So that the freeneſs of grace, and the neceſſity of holy practice, which are thus from time to time joined together in ſcripture, are not inconſiſtent one with another. Nor does it at all diminiſh the honor and importance of faith, that the exerciſes and effects of faith in practice, ſhould be eſteemed the chief ſigns of it; any more than it leſſens the importance of life, that action and motion are eſteemed the chief ſigns of that.

So that in what has been ſaid of the importance of holy practice as the main ſign of ſincerity; there is nothing legal, nothing derogatory to the freedom and ſovereignty of goſpel-grace, nothing in the leaſt claſhing with the goſpel-doctrine of juſtification by faith alone, without the works of the law, nothing in the leaſt tending to leſſen the glory of the Mediator, and our dependence on his righteouſneſs, nothing infringing on the ſpecial prerogatives of faith in the affair of our ſalvation, nothing in any wiſe detracting from the glory of God and his mercy, or exalting man, or diminiſhing his dependence and obligation. So that if any are againſt ſuch an importance of holy practice as has been ſpoken of, it muſt be only from a ſenſeleſs averſion to the letters and ſound of the word *works*; when there is no reaſon in the world to be given for it, but what may be given with equal force, why they ſhould have an averſion to the words *holineſs*, *godlineſs*, *grace*, *religion*, *experience*, and even *faith* itſelf: for to make a righteouſneſs of any of theſe, is as legal, and as inconſiſtent with the way of the new covenant, as to make a righteouſneſs of holy practice. *

It

* " You ſay you know Chriſt, and the love and good-will of Chriſt

It is greatly to the hurt of religion, for perſons to make light of, and inſiſt little on, thoſe things which the ſcripture inſiſt moſt upon, as of moſt importance in the evidence of our intereſt in Chriſt, (under a notion that to lay weight on theſe things is legal, and an old covenant-way;) and ſo to neglect the exerciſes, and effectual operations of grace in practice, and inſiſt almoſt wholly on diſcoveries, and the method and manner of the immanent exerciſes of conſcience and grace in contemplation; depending on an ability to make nice diſtinctions in theſe matters, and a faculty of accurate diſcerning in them, from philoſophy or experience. It is in vain to ſeek for any better, or any further ſigns, than thoſe that the ſcriptures have moſt expreſsly mentioned, and moſt frequently inſiſted on, as ſigns of godlineſs. They who pretend to a greater accuracy in giving ſigns, or by their extraordinary experience, or inſight into the nature of things, to give more diſtinguiſhing marks, which ſhall more thorougly ſearch out, and detect the hypocrite, are but ſubtil to darken their own minds, and the minds of others; their refinings, and nice diſcerning, are in God's ſight, but refined fooliſhneſs, and ſagacious deluſion. Here are applicable thoſe words of Agur, Prov. xxx. 5, 6. "Every "word of God is pure; he is a ſhield to them that put their "truſt in him: add thou not unto his words, leſt he reprove

 "thee,

Chriſt towards you, and that he is the propitiation for your ſins. How do you know this? "He that ſaith I know him, and keepeth "not his commandments, is a liar," 1 John ii. 4. True, might ſome reply, he that keeps not the commands of Chriſt, hath thereby a ſure evidence that he knows him not, and that he is not united to him; but is this any evidence that we do know him, and that we are united to him, if we do keep his commandments? Yes verily, ſaith the apoſtle, "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep "his commandments." And again, verſ. 5. "Hereby know we "that we are in him." What can be more plain? What a vanity is it to ſay, that this is running upon a covenant of works?——O beloved, it is a ſad thing to hear ſuch queſtions, and ſuch cold anſwers alſo, that ſanctification poſſibly may be an evidence. May be? Is it not certain? Aſſuredly to deny it, is as bad as to affirm that God's own promiſes of favour are not ſure evidences thereof, and conſequently that they are lies and untruths.——Our Saviour, who was no legal preacher, pronounceth, and conſequently evidenceth bleſſedneſs, by eight or nine promiſes, expreſsly made to ſuch perſons, as had inherent graces, Matth. v. 3, 4, *&c.*" *Shepard's Sound Believer*, p. 221, 222, 223.

" thee, and thou be found a liar." Our wiſdom and diſcerning, with regard to the hearts of men, is not much to be truſted. We can ſee but a little way into the nature of the ſoul, and the depths of man's heart. The ways are ſo many whereby perſons affections may be moved without any ſupernatural influence, the natural ſprings of the affections are ſo various and ſo ſecret, ſo many things have oftentimes a joint influence on the affections, the imagination, (and that in ways innumerable and unſearchable,) natural temper, education, the common influences of the Spirit of God, a ſurpriſing concourſe of affecting circumſtances, an extraordinary coincidence of things in the courſe of mens thoughts, together with the ſubtil management of inviſible malicious ſpirits; that no philoſophy or experience will ever be ſufficient to guide us ſafely through this labyrinth and maze, without our cloſely following the clue which God has given us in his word. God knows his own reaſons why he inſiſts on ſome things, and plainly ſets them forth as the things that we ſhould try ourſelves by, rather than others. It may be it is becauſe he knows that theſe things are attended with leſs perplexity, and that we are leſs liable to be deceived by them than others. He beſt knows our nature; and he knows the nature and manner of his own operations; and he beſt knows the way of our ſafety: he knows what allowances to make for different ſtates of his church, and different tempers of particular perſons, and varieties in the manner of his own operations, how far nature may reſemble grace, and how far nature may be mixed with grace, what affections may riſe from imagination, and how far imagination may be mixed with ſpiritual illumination. And therefore it is our wiſdom not to take his work out of his hands; but to follow him, and lay the ſtreſs of the judgment of ourſelves there, where he has directed us. If we do otherwiſe, no wonder if we are bewildered, confounded, and fatally deluded. But if we had got into the way of looking chiefly at thoſe things, which Chriſt and his apoſtles and prophets chiefly inſiſted on, and ſo in judging of ourſelves and others, chiefly regarding practical exerciſes and effects of grace, not neglecting other things; it would be of manifold happy conſequence; it would above all things tend to the conviction of deluded hypocrites, and to prevent the deluſion of thoſe whoſe hearts were never brought to a thorough compliance with the ſtrait and narrow way which leads to life; it would tend to deliver us from innumerable perplexities, ariſing from the various inconſiſtent

fiſſent ſchemes there are about methods and ſteps of experience; it would greatly tend to prevent profeſſors neglecting ſtrictneſs of life, and tend to promote their engagedneſs and earneſtneſs in their Chriſtian walk; and it would become faſhionable for men to ſhew their Chriſtianity, more by an amiable diſtinguiſhed behaviour, than by an abundant and exceſſive declaring their experiences; and we ſhould get into the way of appearing lively in religion, more by being lively in the ſervice of God and our generation, than by the livelineſs and forwardneſs of our tongues, and making a buſineſs of proclaming on the houſe-tops, with our mouths, the holy and eminent acts and exerciſes of our own hearts; and Chriſtians that are intimate friends, would talk together of their experiences and comforts, in a manner better becoming Criſtian humility and modeſty, and more to each others profit; their tongues not running before, but rather going behind their hands and feet, after the prudent example of the bleſſed apoſtle, 2 Cor. xii. 6. and many occaſions of ſpiritual pride would be cut off; and ſo a great door ſhut againſt the devil; and a great many of the main ſtumbling-blocks againſt experimental and powerful religion would be removed; and religion would be declared and manifeſted in ſuch a way, that inſtead of hardening ſpectators, and exceedingly promoting infidelity and atheiſm, would above all things tend to convince men that there is a reality in religion, and greatly awaken them, and win them, by convincing their conſciences of the importance and excellency of religion. Thus the light of profeſſors would ſo ſhine before men, that others ſeeing their good works, would glorify their Father which is in heaven.

THE END.

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